Request for Proposals (RFP)
for
Distributed Energy Resource Management Systems (DERMS)

Issued December 2, 2025
Intent to Submit Proposal Forms due December 12, 2025

Big Rivers Electric Corporation
710 West 2nd Street
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1. Confidentiality and Nondisclosure

As part of this Request for Proposal (RFP) process, Big Rivers Electric Corporation (Big Rivers) and any responding Bidder may exchange confidential, proprietary, or otherwise sensitive information. The handling, use, and protection of such information shall be governed exclusively by the mutual Non-Disclosure Agreement in effect between Big Rivers and the bidder.

2. Introduction

2.1. Purpose

Big Rivers hereby issues this RFP for the provision of a Distributed Energy Resource Management System (DERMS) platform. The objective of this RFP is to procure a comprehensive solution capable of integrating, managing, and controlling distributed energy resources (DER) and demand response (DR) programs, while enabling monitoring, control, aggregation, forecasting, and market participation through a unified platform. The selected vendor will provide a system that enhances grid reliability, improves operational efficiency, and supports Big Rivers' long-term sustainability goals.

2.2. Background

Big Rivers is a member-owned, not-for-profit generation and transmission cooperative headquartered in Owensboro, Kentucky. Big Rivers provides wholesale electric power and transmission service to its three distribution cooperative members – Kenergy Corp, Jackson Purchase Energy Cooperative, and Meade County Rural Electric Cooperative Corporation – which collectively serve approximately 120,000 residential, commercial, and industrial consumers across western Kentucky. Big Rivers owns and operates a diverse generation portfolio and transmission system, and its mission is to deliver safe, reliable, and cost-effective energy while supporting the long-term economic vitality and sustainability of the region. To learn more about Big Rivers, visit https://www.bigrivers.com.

2.3. RFP Administrator

The duties of the RFP Administrator will be performed by Alliance for Cooperative Energy Services Power Marketing LLC (ACES). ACES' business model provides an established infrastructure of independent energy management practices that supports the verification of, and compliance with, applicable processes, policies, and procedures. ACES manages a significant amount of confidential data through a combination of specific internal guidelines, the company's independent control group, the company's corporate compliance manager, and periodic reporting to its Board of Directors' Risk Oversight and Audit Committee. ACES takes its obligations regarding the maintenance of Confidential Information very seriously and will handle all Confidential Information with the highest professional regard

2.4. Timeline

The timeline for this RFP is outlined in Figure 1.

Figure 1.

Task/Activity	Dates
RFP Issued	December 2, 2025
Intent to Submit Proposals Deadline	December 12, 2025
Vendor Demonstrations	January 16, 2026
Final Date for RFP Question Submittal	January 28, 2026
Big Rivers Responses to Written Questions	February 6, 2026
Proposal Submission Deadline	February 13, 2026
Analysis of RFP Responses	February 13, 2026 – March 31, 2026
Notification of Shortlisted Responses	April 1, 2026
Final Selection	May 1, 2026
Execution of Contract	May 4, 2026

2.5. Timeline Amendments

Big Rivers or ACES reserves the right to modify the RFP schedule at any time, at its sole discretion. In the event any changes are made to the timeline, ACES will issue a formal addendum to the published RFP and will notify all registered participants via email.

3. Proposal Requirements

To be considered for evaluation, all proposals must strictly adhere to the requirements outlined in this RFP. Failure to comply with these instructions, including responding to all specified sections, will result in the disqualification of the proposal.

3.1. Contact Information

Any communication should be submitted via email to BigRiversRFP@acespower.com.

3.2. Acknowledgement

Notices of intent to respond to this RFP should be provided via email to BigRiversRFP@acespower.com no later than December 12, 2026. All communications should be directed to BigRiversRFP@acespower.com.

3.3. Questions

If you have questions about this RFP or require further explanation, questions should be sent by email to BigRiversRFP@acespower.com no later than **January 28, 2026**. Questions will be posted on the RFP proposal website, and responses will be added by **February 6, 2026**. Any changes or clarifications to the RFP will be issued through an official **Addenda** posted to the RFP website. Verbal explanations or informal communications are not binding.

3.4. Proposal Format Requirements

To ensure consistency and facilitate evaluation, each Bidder must structure their proposal using the format outlined in Figure 2.

Figure 2.

Index	Section	Description
1	Cover Letter	Provide a signed cover letter introducing the Bidder, acknowledging receipt of the RFP, and confirming the Bidder's intent to comply with all requirements.
2	Table of Contents	Include a table of contents with clear section references.
3	Company Information	Include corporate background, organizational structure, key personnel, and relevant experience.
4	Executive Summary	Summarize the proposed solution, highlighting key features, differentiators, and value to Big Rivers.
5	Technical Approach	Describe the proposed DERMS solution, architecture, integrations, scalability, and security.
6	Implementation Plan	Provide project timeline, milestones, roles and responsibilities, and resource commitments.
7	Support, Training, and Maintenance	Detail the proposed support model, training programs, and ongoing maintenance services.
8	Pricing and Fees	Present a clear pricing structure, identifying one-time, recurring, fixed, and variable costs as required.
9	Requirements Questionnaire	Provide detailed responses to all questions and requirements as outlined in the RFP.
10	Data Security and Compliance Questionnaire	Provide a comprehensive description of cybersecurity practices, compliance with industry standards (e.g., National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), ISO, NERC Critical Infrastructure Protection (CIP)), data ownership and privacy policies, incident response procedures, encryption protocols, and disaster recovery capabilities. Bidders must also complete and submit the Cybersecurity Questionnaire as part of this section.
11	Contract Documents	Provide proposed contract, licensing agreements, and terms.
12	Additional Information	Include any other materials or recommendations the Bidder believes are relevant to this proposal

4. Vendor Evaluation Criteria

Big Rivers is seeking an experienced and qualified partner with the expertise to support near-term objectives and the adaptability to evolve with new and emerging DER technologies. Bidders will be evaluated based on their adherence to the criteria outlined in this section. Proposals will be evaluated on how well they address these requirements and demonstrate the ability to deliver a reliable, cost-effective, and sustainable solution. The evaluation criteria are as follows:

- Alignment with proposal requirements
- Relevant prior experience
- Specialized knowledge and expertise
- Operational strengths and opportunities
- Cost competitiveness

5. Reference Requirements

Bidders should provide a minimum of three references from similar projects performed for utility clients over the past three years. Bidders should provide references for all subcontractors they anticipate using during the project. References shall provide the following information:

- Utility/subcontractor name
- Telephone
- E-mail address
- Project name
- Project start and end dates
- Project scope
- Project results

6. Requirements Questionnaire

6.1. DERMS Information and Device and Control Capabilities

1. Provide a complete list of original equipment manufacturers (OEM) and device types currently compatible with your DERMS platform.
2. What addition of new devices or manufacturers to the platform can Big Rivers expect? Include anticipated timelines for integration.
3. Supply a breakdown of active OEM integrations, including current device counts for each, within Big Rivers' service territories (zip codes provided in Section 9)
4. Can the system generate regular updates (e.g., semi-annual) of active device counts per OEM for Big Rivers' review?
5. For each device type, describe the level of control and monitoring available (e.g., set point adjustments, seasonal event limits, device location data, inverter/battery management, telemetry validation, online/offline indicators, etc.).
6. Does the platform natively support two-second telemetry for aggregated devices? If not, what is the recommended approach to achieve this level of granularity?
7. What visibility does the system provide into individual and aggregated device performance (e.g., real-time energy/demand, interval data)?
8. Can devices be grouped and dispatched flexibly (by member, geographic area, device type, or other criteria)?
9. Does the software allow the same devices to be organized into multiple independently controllable groups (e.g., one group for all members, another for a single member, or, in other words, multi-tenant)
10. Describe Bidder's ability to automatically assign devices to groups (e.g., using uploaded customer information system (CIS) or Geographic Information Systems (GIS) data to link devices to feeders or substations).
11. Can the platform manage devices at the substation level, either natively or via integration with GIS/Meter Data Management Systems (MDMS) tools? Please describe.

12. Can the solution support automated dispatch logic based on Big Rivers-defined triggers (e.g., temperature-humidity index (THI) thresholds, load constraints)?
13. Can the system be integrated with utility control platforms, such as AspenTech, for direct device control?
14. Outline current and planned communication protocols the solution supports (e.g., Wi-Fi, cellular, SCADA, MultiSpeak, OpenADR, Zigbee, radio). Can these be used as alternatives to OEM integrations?

6.2. Software and Data

1. Please explain the primary functions and design of the DERMS platform, including available control options, user experience features, and whether the solution supports Bring Your Own Device (BYOD).
2. Describe how the system captures and reports data at the device and program level. Include details such as enrollment tracking, event history, device activity and performance, opt-out behavior, customer details, run times, online/offline status, and set point management.
3. Does the system allow reports to be tailored to user-specific needs? If so, what level of customization is possible and what limitations exist? Who owns the data? Can Big Rivers obtain full data sets for their own internal analysis?
4. Does the platform generate and send reports automatically (e.g., recurring enrollment or performance reports distributed to multiple stakeholders)? Please describe this functionality and any constraints.
5. Explain how the platform manages user roles and permissions.
6. Can the platform provide certain member cooperatives with read-only access to devices operating in their respective service areas?
7. Does the solution support layered or flexible role assignments (e.g., multiple roles or custom role creation)? Please describe.
8. Can the platform host branded enrollment portals for each member system? If so, please provide costs and expected timelines.
9. Explain how the platform communicates with customers and program participants (e.g., confirmation notices, enrollment approval/denial, event alerts, device status notifications). Which channels (text, email, phone, etc.) are supported? Are these message templates configurable?
10. Please provide examples of customizations Bidder has developed for other clients that could be applied to Big Rivers. Include associated costs.
11. Describe the IT infrastructure required from Big Rivers and its members to support the solution.
12. What database technologies (e.g., SQL, Oracle, Access) are utilized by the platform?
13. Where is the system hosted (e.g., on-premises, cloud, AWS, etc.)? Please explain redundancy and high-availability measures.
14. How is historical data retained and for what length of time?
15. How is the accuracy of measurement and verification (M&V) data ensured? Please identify any industry standards followed.
16. Describe the Distribution System Operator (DSO) models that the platform supports.
17. Please provide the Bidder's approach to system resilience and recovery from disruptions.

18. For cloud-hosted services, identify available service regions/zones. Can hosting be limited to specific regions or jurisdictions?
19. Does the solution incorporate artificial intelligence (AI)? If so, describe the applications, data usage, and safeguards.

6.3. Partnerships and Integrations

1. For each of the following systems, explain how the DERMS solution connects, what functionality is enabled, and whether additional development or costs are required:
    - National Information Solutions Cooperative (NISC) and Meridian – integration of customer information systems for streamlined enrollment and outreach.
    - AspenTech – ability to share DERMS data for planning and operations, including real-time control of DER units.
    - Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) and MDMS – ability to use AMI data for measurement and verification (identify specific vendor experience such as Aclara, Sensus, Eaton, Landis+Gyr, Tantalus, and Verizon).
    - Generator Grid Services – integration with existing generator programs such as (Generac, PowerSecure, etc.) for dispatch and visibility.
    - Conservation Voltage Reduction (CVR) – describe any CVR-related capabilities.
    - GIS – availability of GIS/location data integration with member systems.
    - Power Costs, Inc. (PCI) – ability to provide information for power marketing and energy accounting.
    - Itron, Amperon, or Oracle Utilities for meter data analysis – describe your integration for forecasting services.
2. Describe how Bidder manages integration projects, including approach, timelines, and responsibilities shared with the utility.
3. Provide examples of past utility integrations (outside of Big Rivers) that demonstrate the solution's flexibility and scalability.
4. If there are costs associated with integration into these systems, please provide details on one-time versus ongoing charges.
5. Please identify any additional partnerships or integrations Bidder offers that would bring value to Big Rivers and specify related costs.
6. Describe how your platform can adapt as new partnerships or emerging technologies become available in the market.

6.4. Member-Consumer Experience

1. Walk through the full enrollment process for a member-consumer, from initial sign-up to activation, including how OEM device enrollment pathways are handled.
2. How would integration with a utility's CIS affect or streamline the enrollment process?
3. What technical requirements must a member-consumer meet to enroll devices (e.g., Wi-Fi connection, internet speed, or data transfer requirements)?

4. Describe the user experience during enrollment — what the consumer sees, what notifications they receive, and how confirmation is provided.
5. How does the platform ensure a simple, consistent, and user-friendly process for consumers across multiple Member systems within Big Rivers?
6. Can the solution support branded or customized enrollment experiences for individual members? If so, please explain the available options.
7. Describe how the system manages communication with consumers during and after enrollment (e.g., application confirmations, status updates, event participation notifications).
8. Are communication methods (text, email, phone, in-app, etc.) configurable by the utility or the consumer?
9. What measures are in place to minimize consumer enrollment failures and to support troubleshooting when issues occur?
10. Provide examples of how the platform has been tailored to enhance consumer experience in other utility programs.

6.5. Program Management and Implementation

1. Outline the proposed implementation timeline from contract award through day one of operations, including major milestones and deliverables (e.g., migration of existing programs, testing, and system go-live).
2. Provide a responsibility matrix that clearly shows the roles and responsibilities of Bidder's team, Big Rivers, and any subcontractors or partners during implementation.
3. If subcontractors or third-party partners are part of the proposed solution, please identify their roles and explain how Bidder manages coordination with them.
4. Does Bidder allow Big Rivers to choose or change the assigned project manager? Explain the process for project manager selection.
5. Describe the composition of the team that would be dedicated to Big Rivers during the implementation phase.
6. How does Bidder manage program reporting and communications during implementation (e.g., frequency of updates, issue tracking, escalation paths)?
7. Please describe the process and timelines for migrating existing DR programs and devices into the platform, including thermostats and generators currently managed in other systems.
8. What role would Big Rivers be expected to play in working directly with device manufacturers during migration or integration?
9. Describe Bidder's training and technical support plan for Big Rivers staff during the implementation stage, including available resources and the qualifications of support personnel.
10. Provide examples of implementation projects with other utilities and how lessons learned from those efforts would inform Bidder's approach with Big Rivers.

6.6. Measurement and Verification

1. Describe the platform's capabilities for M&V, including the types of data collected and how results are validated.

2. Can the system connect to each member's AMI to verify program outcomes? If so, please explain the process.
3. How quickly is post-event data available through the system (e.g., within 1 hour, 24 hours)?
4. Does Bidder conduct M&V functions in-house or utilize third-party providers? Please describe the approach and any partners involved.
5. Big Rivers is evaluating participation in MISO markets as a Demand Response Resource Type 1 (DRR Type 1) and Load-Modifying Resource (LMR) to support Energy and Ancillary services markets. What current experience does Bidder have with these MISO services, and what is the plan for becoming qualified if not already?
6. Please provide examples of how Bidder's M&V capabilities have been used by other utilities to meet regulatory or market participation requirements.
7. What data validation methods or standards (e.g., industry benchmarks) does the bidder follow to ensure accuracy in reported savings and performance?
8. How does Bidder handle discrepancies between forecasted and measured performance, and how is this communicated to the utility?
9. Please describe how Bidder's M&V system integrates with reporting tools to provide member-level and consumer-level insights.
10. Are automated M&V reports available, and if so, can they be customized by member system or program type?

7. Cybersecurity and Compliance Questionnaire

7.1. Security Standards

1. Indicate which cybersecurity frameworks and standards (e.g., NIST CSF, NIST 800-82 for OT, ISO 27001) Bidder follows for on-premises system deployments.
2. Describe how the company and the system align with NERC CIP.
3. Outline processes to prevent vulnerable, malicious, or unstable code from being introduced during system development, including controls related to AI-generated code.
4. Describe the notification process for informing customers of security incidents.

7.2. Access Control and Authentication

1. Outline mechanisms in place to secure local and remote access (e.g., multi-factor authentication (MFA), role-based access control (RBAC), least-privilege principles, etc.).
2. Describe management and logging practices for privileged access to systems.
3. Explain how remote vendor support connections are secured (e.g., VPN, jump servers, session recording).

7.3. Data Security and Privacy

1. Describe your approach to encrypting data at rest and in transit.
2. Confirm whether encryption standards comply with recognized industry best practices.

7.4. System Integration and Operational Security

1. Explain how secure communications with SCADA, EMS, and field devices are achieved.
2. Specify which industry-standard protocols are supported (e.g., IEEE 2030.5, DNP3, IEC 61850) and how encryption and authentication are enforced.
3. Provide reference architectures or hardening guides for secure deployment in the OT network.
4. Describe redundancy, failover, and backup restoration options supported by the system.

7.5. Vulnerability and Third-Party Risk Management

1. Provide attestations, aligned with industry standards, regarding supply chain integrity for all software and hardware provided.
2. Outline the approach for vetting, patching, and testing updates from third-party vendors, including open-source components.
3. Describe the process for identifying, mitigating, and patching vulnerabilities in the software provided.
4. Provide expected remediation timelines for critical vulnerabilities.

7.6. Employee, Contractor, and Vendor Validation

1. Describe the processes for validating the identity of all employees, contractors, and vendors who design, support, or maintain the system.
2. Outline measures for monitoring and auditing access by third parties, including contractors and remote vendor staff.

8. Pricing

Bidders shall provide a detailed explanation of the pricing structure for the proposed DERMS solution. At a minimum, please address the following:

- **Base Offering:** Clearly define the features, functionalities, and services included in your standard/base system offering.
- **Base and Optional Pricing:** Provide pricing for the base system, along with costs for optional upgrades, add-on modules, or enhancements.
- **Ongoing Maintenance and Support:** Specify recurring costs for system maintenance, software support, and service agreements.
- **Historical Cost Increases:** State the average annual historical percentage increase in costs for software, hosting services, and maintenance fees.
- **Software Upgrades:** Indicate whether upgrades for new system releases are included in the base fee, or if separate costs apply.
- **Third-Party Licensing:** Identify any third-party software licenses required for DERMS implementation or ongoing operation, and detail associated costs if not included in the proposed price.
- **Integration Costs:** Provide pricing for integrations between the DERMS solution and existing Big Rivers systems, including but not limited, to CIS, AMI, MDMS, GIS, SCADA, forecasting tools, and power market platforms.

Bidders are encouraged to present their cost structures in a transparent format, clearly distinguishing between one-time, recurring, fixed, and variable costs.

8.1. Pricing Table

Bidders shall complete the Pricing Table Template provided in Figure 3 in full. All costs must be broken down by year and by category, clearly identifying which are **one-time** versus **recurring**, and which are **fixed** versus **variable**. Costs should include all expenses required for successful implementation, operation, and maintenance of the DERMS solution, including software, licenses, integrations, hosting, training, and support.

If certain items do not apply to your solution, indicate "N/A" in the corresponding field rather than leaving the field blank. Any **optional features, services, or program enhancements** should be listed separately and fully explained in the "Notes" column, with pricing clearly distinguished from the base offering.

Bidders are encouraged to provide additional explanatory notes where appropriate to ensure transparency and facilitate comparison across proposals.

Figure 3.

Item	Setup and Implementation Costs	Year 1 Operations Costs (2026)	Year 2 Operations Costs (2027)	Year 3 Operations Costs (2028)	Year 4 Operations Costs (2029)	Notes (One-Time/Recurring, Fixed/Variable)
Program Set-up Fees (one-time)						
Annual License Fees						
Additional Member Configuration Fees						
Integration Costs – CIS						
Integration Costs – AMI/MDMS						
Integration Costs – GIS						
Integration Costs – SCADA/OMS						
Integration Costs – Forecasting Tools						
Integration Costs – Market Systems						
Migration of Existing Programs/Devices						

Item	Setup and Implementation Costs	Year 1 Operations Costs (2026)	Year 2 Operations Costs (2027)	Year 3 Operations Costs (2028)	Year 4 Operations Costs (2029)	Notes (One-Time/Recurring, Fixed/Variable)
M&V Integration Services						
Marketing and Enrollment Support						
Training and Technical Support						
Ongoing Maintenance and Hosting						
Other Annual Fixed Fees (specify)						
Other Annual Variable Fees (specify)						
Optional Program Features (rebate processing, forecasting, etc.)						
Totals						

9. Zip Codes for Saturation Study

Zip Codes									
42001	42029	42058	42087	42037	42461	42463	42402	42301	42366
42003	42035	42060	42230	42064	42462	42420	42419	42302	42375
42021	42036	42070	42239	42084	42403	47712	42457	42303	42376
42022	42039	42078	42250	42411	42404	42452	42327	42304	42377
42023	42044	42081	42272	42450	42409	42406	42350	42334	42378
42024	42045	42082	42288	42459	42444	42458	42352	42351	42343
42025	42047	42083	42289	42437	42455	42451	42371	42355	42348
42028	42056	42086	42033	42460	42456	47708	42372	42356	42364
42368	42361	42440	42325	42367	40145	40178	40155	42762	42701
42320	42369	42441	42326	42374	40146	42445	40157	42755	42702
42328	42370	42442	42330	40111	40152	42038	40161	40150	42724
42333	42408	42453	42332	40115	40153	42055	40177	40159	42732
42338	42410	42464	42337	40119	40170	40104	42754	40160	42740
42347	42413	42321	42339	40140	40171	40108	42726	40162	42776
42349	42431	42323	42344	40143	40175	40117	42721	40121	42784
42354	42436	42324	42345	40144	40176	40142	42712	40122	42788

10. Form of Contract

1. Provide a draft of the proposed contract, including a detailed Scope of Work and any required licensing agreements, for Big Rivers' review.
2. What is the standard contract term, and does Bidder offer flexibility in adjusting the duration (e.g., extensions, renewals)?
3. Are there any service-level commitments, performance guarantees, or penalties for non-performance typically included in Bidder's contracts? Please explain.
4. What termination provisions are included in Bidder's standard agreement, and what obligations would Big Rivers have in such a case?
5. Describe how intellectual property rights, data ownership, and confidentiality are addressed in Bidder's standard contract language.
6. Are the contracts structured to allow for future expansion of services or additional members without renegotiating the entire agreement?
7. Provide examples of contract structures with other utilities that demonstrate flexibility while maintaining clear accountability.