

State and Private Forestry

FY 2011 Western Competitive Resource Allocation

Instructions to States

OVERVIEW

The State and Private Forestry (S&PF) organization of the USDA Forest Service reaches across the boundaries of National Forests to States, Tribes, communities, and non-industrial private landowners. Each State uses the support afforded by S&PF assistance to address forest conservation, protection, and enhancement needs.

The success of S&PF is based on the assumption that the collective efforts of Federal and State agencies, Tribes, organizations, communities, and individuals will be most effective if federal resources are focused on issues and landscapes of national importance and prioritized on activities that promise meaningful outcomes on the ground. This framework for successful natural resource enhancement is captured as: **focus + priority = outcome**. This competitive grant process involves state forestry agencies in selecting proposals that meet this standard. The process is an effective means of ensuring that federal S&PF dollars are invested in projects that enhance landscapes, address issues of national importance that are identified and supported locally, and provide meaningful, lasting, and measurable outcomes. National guidance and resource documents including, draft outcomes, objectives and performance measures, are available online at <http://www.fs.fed.us/spf/redesign/>.

FY 2011 PROCESS

For FY 2011, 15% of the S&PF Western regional allocation will be dedicated to funding projects selected through this competitive grant process. The net available **will include** funds in the Forest Stewardship, Urban and Community Forestry, Forest Health Management-Cooperative Lands, Forest Health Management-Cooperative Lands (National Fire Plan), State Fire Assistance, and State Fire Assistance (National Fire Plan) programs. The Competitive Resource Allocation **will not include** funds from Volunteer Fire Assistance, Forest Legacy, Economic Action, and Federal Lands Forest Health Management programs.

Project proposals will be submitted by States and then screened and evaluated by the FY 2011 Competitive Grant Team. This team is made up of 6 State members representing different states and resource specialties as well as 6 Federal members representing a variety of programmatic, disciplinary, and geographic areas. Recommendations from this team will be considered by the Western Forestry Leadership Coalition (WFLC) in the process of making final funding recommendations. A list of recommended projects will be forwarded to the USDA Forest Service State and Private Forestry Deputy Area by the WFLC. Final competitive funding allocation will be distributed to States by their respective USDA Forest Service Region.

The following set of instructions create a framework for Western states to identify and articulate how their proposed projects respond to the **focus + priority = outcome** framework as well as one or more of the three State and Private Forestry National Themes.

GENERAL PROJECT ELIGIBILITY AND SIDEBARS

- State Forestry Agencies are the only eligible lead applicant.
- States are limited to submitting 4 single-state project proposals and can serve as lead applicant on only one multi-state project proposal.

- There is no limit to the number of multi-state projects in which a state can participate as co-applicant.
- Each single project proposal (including multi-state projects) will be limited to a \$300,000 request.
- No state will receive more than 15% of the total funds available to the West through this process.
- Projects can indicate a multi-year implementation timeframe, up to three years.
- Projects that involve collaboration among multiple entities are encouraged.
- Collaboration and coordination with public land management agencies is encouraged; however, grant awards can only be used on non-federal (including Tribal) land.

PROJECT PROPOSAL CRITERIA

All project proposals will be screened and evaluated based on the following:

Screening Criteria

Meets the general project eligibility and sidebars	Yes = Eligible	No = Ineligible
Meets the 1:1 non-federal match requirement ¹	Yes = Eligible	No = Ineligible
Clearly addresses one or more of the S&PF National Themes and associated outcomes	Yes = Eligible	No = Ineligible
References all relevant Statewide Forest Resource Assessments & Strategies	Yes = Eligible	No = Ineligible

Evaluation Criteria²

	2 pts – High	1 pts – Medium	0 pts - Absent
Project Abstract	Provides a succinct and relevant overview; could easily be used to communicate critical elements and value of the project.	Summarizes the project but has little communication value.	No project abstract provided.

	8 pts – High	6 pts – Medium	2 pts - Low
Project Description	Clearly describes the project in terms of need, goals and objectives, work to be completed (how grant funds are to be used), and measures of success. Clearly draws on elements of relevant Statewide Assessments and Strategies and addresses one or more S&PF National Themes.	Clearly defines some aspects of the project, but others are unclear or not measurable.	Unclear what work is being proposed, why, or how to tell when the project is successfully completed.

(1) The allocated grant amount must be matched in full and along program authorities by the recipient using non-federally funded sources, except as authorized for the Insular Areas in 48USC1469a and Amendment of Subsection (d). Matching requirements for dollars awarded through the competitive allocation process may be met through consolidation as currently handled through consolidated payment grants. See Program Authorities Guide for additional information.

(2) Only full point scores will be assigned; no zeroes will be assigned unless a field is left blank. The maximum *total score* any one application can receive is 40.

	5 pts – High	3 pts – Medium	1 pts - Low
<i>Program Integration</i>	Clearly integrates S&PF and/or other programs in a meaningful, complementary, and synergistic way beyond traditional relationships.	Integrates S&PF and/or other programs. The complementary role and contribution of each program is less clear or novel.	Does not appear to integrate S&PF or other programs in a complementary or meaningful way.
<i>Collaboration</i>	Demonstrated collaboration with partners who clearly shaped project proposal and are committed to achievement of mutual outcomes.	Collaboration with partners identifiable; contribution to project proposal or commitment to achievement of mutual outcomes limited.	Some collaboration appears to exist but is not a meaningful element of the proposal.
<i>Leverage</i>	Project will maximize leveraged resources (financial and in-kind) and outcomes from multiple entities that share the S&PF mission and support state capacity needs.	Project will leverage resources and outcomes from other entities. Connection to S&PF mission and state capacity needs is present but not extensive.	Project has little leveraged support and outcome potential from entities that support S&PF mission or state capacity needs.
<i>Meaningful Scale</i>	Scale of the project is clearly based on and is appropriate for the outcomes to be achieved.	Scale of the project is only partially based on or appropriate for the outcomes to be achieved.	Scale of the project does not appear to be based on or appropriate for the outcomes to be achieved.
<i>Sphere of Influence</i>	Approach clearly provides value beyond project and/or state boundaries; will be held up as an example and is replicable.	Approach may provide value beyond project and/or state boundaries, but not a central component of the project or replicability questionable.	Approach has limited value beyond project and/or state boundaries; would be difficult to replicate elsewhere.
<i>Sustainability of Outcomes</i>	Project clearly results in skills and enhanced capacity that extend beyond the life of the project itself.	Project will result in some limited skills and enhanced capacity building beyond the life of the project.	Unclear how project will create lasting skills and capacity.

DETAILED PROJECT PROPOSAL INSTRUCTIONS

Proposal Form: All blocks are fill-in enabled and character locked. Applicants must fit all information into the allotted character space. Proposals that have been modified for any reason will be considered ineligible by the review committee. Any attachments or additional documents will not be considered by the review committee. Single- and Multi-State proposal forms are available in PDF format online at http://www.wflcenter.org/spf_grants_11/. A current version of Adobe Reader is required to open and complete the proposal form; the software is free and available online at <http://get.adobe.com/reader/>. Proposals may be re-named, saved, and should be submitted via email by clicking the “submit form” button.

Proposal Instructions by Box Number:

- **Filename.** Enter the single keyword that will be used in the proposal filename to identify the project. The state abbreviation in this section will be automatically generated by information entry in the applicant information box.
- **Box 1- Applicant Information.** Enter the State Forestry Agency applicant (and co-applicants in the multi-state form) contact information.
- **Box 2- Project Information.** Enter a descriptive title (sufficient to identify the location and nature of work being proposed); partnering agencies/organizations (eligible entities include other State Forestry Agencies, nonprofit

organizations, academic institutions, Tribal Governments, Local Governments, other federal agencies³, individuals, and private businesses if not excluded by law, regulation, or policy; do not re-state the applicant and co-applicants here); and project location (states, counties, Congressional districts, and Forest Service Regions in which the project will occur). Entering names of counties and congressional districts within which work will occur is optional.

- **Box 3- Project Duration.** Applicants are encouraged to submit projects that are designed, implemented, and monitored over a time frame that suits the project need, up to a maximum of three years.
- **Box 4- National Relevance.** Check one or more boxes indicating which of the three S&PF National Themes will be addressed through this project. Check whether the project is responsive to all relevant Statewide Forest Resource Assessments and Strategies.⁴
- **Box 5- Project Abstract.** Clearly summarize the proposed project in 1,000 characters or less.
- **Box 6- Project Budget.** Enter all project expenses by funding source (grant request, applicant and co-applicant, non-federal contributor, other contributor). All qualifying match and additional resources (leverage) should be included. The totals will calculate automatically. Totals for ‘funds requested’ and ‘match’ at the top of Page 1 will also calculate automatically based on what is entered here.
- **Box 7- Project Description.** Provide a clear and detailed description of the project, including background information, need (issue/problem statement), goals and objectives, work to be completed (how grant funds are to be used), and measures of success. Make a tie to relevant Statewide Forest Resource Assessments and Strategies and describe how the project addresses one or more S&PF National Themes.
- **Box 8- Leverage.** Enter all project partners (applicant, co-applicants, federal and non-federal) and their respective contribution (financial or in-kind) to the project. The total will calculate automatically. Do not include non-project-related applicant contributions (e.g., CPG match) or grant funds requested. Total leverage may exceed qualifying match identified in the project budget, but no new funds should be entered here that are not included in the project budget. In the narrative space allowed, describe how the project will leverage resources and outcomes from entities that share the S&PF mission and support state capacity needs.
- **Box 9- Program Integration.** Describe how the project integrates S&PF and/or other programs in a meaningful and complementary way that goes beyond traditional relationships to achieve the project outcomes.
- **Box 10- Collaboration.** Qualitatively describe the contributions each partner has made and will make during the life of the proposed project and their depth of commitment to the achievement of mutual outcomes.
- **Box 11- Meaningful Scale.** Describe how the scale of the project is appropriate for and will facilitate the achievement of the desired outcomes.
- **Box 12- Sphere of Influence.** Describe how the proposed activities will provide value beyond project and/or state boundaries and serve as an example for others to follow in the future.
- **Box 13- Sustainability of Outcomes.** Describe how the project will result in skills and capabilities that will extend beyond the life of the project itself.

DEADLINES AND IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- **All project proposals must be received by 5:00 p.m., MDT on October 4, 2010.**
- File names should conform to the following guidelines.
 - State_Keyword.pdf – Each project filename must include: 1. State/lead applicant two-letter postal abbreviation and 2. One “keyword” that represents the title of the project. (Example: CO_Huerfano.pdf)
- Submit project proposals to WFLC in PDF format by clicking the “submit form” button OR
- You may also send completed project proposals (individual or a complete state package) as PDF attachments by email to dcoelho@fs.fed.us.

(3) Collaboration with other federal agencies is allowable and resources may be leveraged, but contributions do not count towards required match.

(4) Consider using the “Discussion Questions for State and USFS Regional Collaboration” document as a guide for collaboration. Available online at http://www.wflccenter.org/spf_grants_11/.