



FY 2018 Landscape Scale Restoration Competitive Process A National Overview and Western Guidance

Proposals for the Western Forestry Leadership Coalition (WFLC) Landscape Scale Restoration Competitive Process (LSR) are submitted online. You will be able to share, save drafts, and submit your applications with a click!

Multi-State Proposals: If a state is participating in a multi-state project, and more than one state/island is requesting direct funds they should use the multi-state proposal on-line system to share, develop and submit one proposal with multiple budgets.

Each State Forester will receive a password for FY2018 to start an application. Applicants create and submit their forms at www.forestrygrants.org/westernLSR.

All project proposals must be received by 5:00 p.m., MDT on Friday, September 15, 2017. Proposals submitted after this deadline will not be considered for the grant year.

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GENERAL PROJECT ELIGIBILITY AND SIDEBARS

- State Forestry Agencies are the only eligible applicants.
- States are limited to submitting 3 proposals. Each proposal will be limited to a \$300,000 request.
- **Multi-State Proposals:** Please see directions below on how to submit a multi-state proposal. The proposal will count toward each state's maximum submission of three, with each separate budget limited to a \$300,000 request. The proposal will be scored as one in order to receive the same ranked position. The "lead" applicant is the state that begins the application and has a "submit" button. There is no other distinction between lead and co-applicants(s). A state can participate in a multi-state project and choose not to submit a multi-state proposal. This would allow the narratives to be unique to each state.
- Projects that include collaboration among multiple entities are encouraged within the criteria.
- 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 (3) years. Funding, however, will be delivered in the Fiscal Year of the application.
- Collaboration and coordination with the USDA Forest Service and other public land management agencies is encouraged; however, grant awards can only be used for work on non-federal (including Tribal) land.
- Proposals require a 1:1 match from the **state** grant recipient and a 1:1 match on funds received in excess of \$200,000 for territorial, flag islands and freely associated states. The list for all are: Territory of Guam, Territory of American Samoa, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Republic of Palau, Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Federated States of Micronesia.
 - The WFLC has approved a sub-competition for the Western Pacific islands. There is no difference in the applications process. All applications use the same www.forestrygrants.org web portal and have the same deadlines and guidance. Projects submitted by the Pacific island agencies (PI) will be submitted and scored with all other applications. PI projects that are successful and are less than \$200,000 per project will be funded via set-aside funding of up to

\$300,000. This offers an opportunity for smaller projects from the PI applicants to compete with the larger \$300,000 projects for funding. Any PI projects requesting funding above \$200,000 will not take part in the sub-competition and will instead compete and be funded within the WLSR process. Any funding not used in the PI sub-competition will be returned to the regular WLSR funding pool for use on other projects.

The 15% cap will be set prior to the \$300,000 sub-competition funds are set-aside.

NATIONAL OVERVIEW

This document summarizes parts of the National Guidance. It is NOT meant to substitute the National Guidance. All applicants should also read the National Guidance <https://www.thewflc.org/landscape-scale-restoration-competitive-grant-program/fy-2018-landscape-scale-restoration>.

Landscape Scale Restoration (LSR) formally replaces what was known as the Competitive Resource Allocation Process. The LSR Competitive Allocation projects should include a focus on priority landscapes and innovative cross-boundary projects should be encouraged in the regional competitions. “Cross-boundary” is meant to be defined broadly. Innovative projects should integrate S&PF programs and cross any combination of ownership and management boundaries. “Cross-Boundary” does not require the inclusion of National Forest System (NFS) lands, and, in order to be consistent with S&PF authorities, if NFS lands are included in a landscape-level project, the state must ensure no S&PF LSR funds are spent on the NFS lands.

Reporting and Tracking

State and Private Forestry’s new Landscape Scale Reporting (LaSR) system will be used to report accomplishment tracking in this program. Please see National Guidance for requirements.

Forest Actions Plans, Cross-Boundary and Landscape Scale

Funds will be allocated on a competitive basis, guided by the priorities outlined in State Forest Action Plans. The projects are required to address nationally and regionally significant issues or landscapes and will focus on conserving working forests, protecting forests from harm, and enhancing public benefits from trees and forests. The LSR projects should include a focus on priority landscapes, cross-boundary projects as well as addressing issues identified in the respective State’s Forest Action Plans.

WESTERN FY 2018 PROCESS

Multi-State Proposals

Collaborative projects that focus on priority landscapes and cross-boundaries, such as multi-state projects are encouraged within the criteria. For application purposes, you could use the multi-state check off box only if the project involves more than one state **AND more than one state is requesting direct funds**. If a project collaborates with another state which is not requesting funds, then that is described in the narrative, but not checked off as a multi-state proposal. Multi-state projects are encouraged and should score high in the evaluation whether this box is checked off or not.

If you choose to submit a multi-state proposal, the multi-state proposal check off box must be properly marked on the application. An “applicants” menu will then appear for you to add other participating states and contact information. This proposal will now also appear in the participating states list of proposals. It is the same proposal with only the funding request and budget being unique. The proposal will count toward each state’s maximum submission of three, with each separate budget limited to a \$300,000 request. The “lead” applicant is the state/island that begins the application and has a “submit” button. There is no other distinction between lead and co-applicant(s). The proposal

will be scored as one in order to receive the same ranked position. However, if the project is recommended for funding, it would still be possible for one state to receive funds and another not, due to the 15% cap.

A state can participate in a multi-state project and chose not to submit a multi-state proposal. This would allow the narratives to be unique to each state.

Matching Requirements

The LSR Competitive Process grant awards require a 1:1 match from the state grant recipient and a 1:1 match on funds received in excess of \$200,000 for territorial, flag islands and freely associated states.

Matching requirements for dollars awarded through the competitive allocation process will be handled consistently with consolidated payment grants (CPG) methodology. Cash and in-kind contributions for project elements that do not fall within S&PF program authorities may not be used as match. Other “non-match” leveraged funds do not need to meet the same standards (e.g., may include funds for construction, funds from other federal partners). Identifying sources of leverage and match are important in the reporting process for the use of these funds and information will be collected each fiscal year by the USFS.

Multi-year projects

Multi-year projects will be fully funded in one year. If not possible, each phase will need to compete.

Eligibility Requirements – S&PF Program Authorities

Grant proposal must meet requirements of S&PF Program Authorities and OMB cost principles. We encourage collaboration between the states and the USFS to avoid eligibility issues. Below are some common issues:

Construction is not an allowable cost (grant or match) under current S&PF Program Authorities or cost principles. Projects that involve requests for funds and/or provides match for construction of new buildings or roads are not eligible. Construction activities completed by private companies and/or state agencies may apply as leverage (not S&PF component or match).

However, projects that involve restoration activities (e.g., stream bank stabilization, stream crossing enhancement, and fencing) with a direct benefit to the forest and/or wildlife habitat, and still meeting requirements, may be funded through Rural Forestry Assistance Authorities, which are included in the LSR authority. Green infrastructure (GI) activities associated with planting and maintaining trees in urban landscapes on non-federal public land for public benefit, or on private land as part of a demonstration project where a clear public benefit exists are eligible for funding. Example GI activities include (but are not limited to) tree planting, curb cuts to direct water into planted beds with trees and shrubs, installation of pervious pavers or grates to allow water and oxygen to infiltrate into tree planting sites, removal of small sections of pavement when creating or expanding tree planting sites including rain gardens or bioswales.

Purchasing of land is not an allowable cost with grant funds or the use of partner purchase of land as match.

Purchase of special purpose (technical) equipment greater than \$5,000 is allowable with prior approval by the awarding agency office (USFS Region). Purchase of equipment less than \$5,000 is allowable without prior approval by the awarding agency office.

Research-related activities are not allowable costs. Research involves testing a new theory or hypothesis. The end product may be a new model that the researcher will be publishing. On the other hand, monitoring, technical transfer, education, and outreach activities can be included in the proposal, and a research entity could be included as a partner, with their contribution leveraged in the larger project proposal, but not within the S&PF funded component (federal dollars and associated cost share).

Reporting (NEW UPDATES FOR FY 2018)

Once funded, all competitive projects will be required to provide spatial data through the USFS LaSR system. Reports will be requested of the states by the Forest Service at the end of the fiscal year in which project funds were awarded, and at the end of each fiscal year through the end of the project. Please see National Guidance.

In addition, for the FY 2018 grant year and onward, applicants that are awarded grants are required to return to their submitted application and check the box “Awarded” to indicate that the grant received funding from the U.S. Forest Service. Awarded applicants are required to complete this step after they receive their **Funding Advice Letter**. This will allow your grant to be searched later by this tool and will require updates on the awarded grant until completion.

Modifications to Grants

Modifications to competitively-awarded grants (whether the project is an individual grant or part of a CPG) is handled between the signatories of the grants (i.e., the State Forester and the USFS Regional Office). All efforts should be made to ensure substantive consistency with the initial application.

Ranking and Recommending

The western interagency LSR team will review and rank proposals. The recommended ranked list will be approved by the Western Forestry Leadership Coalition members. Once approved, the ranked list is forwarded to the US Forest Service Washington S&PF Budget Office (WO). When the western allocation is decided for that fiscal year, the ranked list will be reconciled with the funding total and notices will be sent from the WO to the State and Private Forestry Directors.

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
Addresses one or more of the S&PF National Themes and associated outcomes	Yes = Eligible	No = Ineligible

Evaluation Criteria^{2, 3}

	4-5 pts - High	3 pts – Medium	0-2 pts - Low
Project Overview/Purpose Statement	Provides a succinct and relevant overview; could easily be used to communicate critical elements and value of the project.	Summarized the project but has little communication value.	Does not effectively summarize the proposed project.

	10-15 pts - High	4-9 pts – Medium	0-3 pts - Low
Context, Goals, and Objectives	Context clearly identifies priority landscapes and issues that are being addressed. Goals and objectives address the national	Project context, goals and objectives are present, but underdeveloped. The priority landscape and/or national	Project context, goals, and objectives are unclear.

	themes being addressed by the project.	themes are not adequately addressed.	
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	14-20 pts - High	6-13 pts – Medium	0-5 pts - Low
<i>Proposed Activities</i>	Clearly describes with specificity, activities to be completed with grant funds and leveraged resources. Links specific project activities to funding amounts in the Project Budget and to stated project goals and objectives.	Describes project activities and how grant funds and leveraged resources will be used, but lacks detail and/or some resources included in the Project Budget are unaccounted for. Links to the stated goals and objectives may be weak.	Insufficient detail is provided as to what work will be completed using grant funds and leveraged resources. Little or no link to the Project Budget or stated goals and objectives.

(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.

(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 100. Each LSR team reviewer must resolve any scoring ties between assigned applications, to yield a ranked list of reviewed applications from 1 to x. The application rankings are averaged across the reviewers, with the highest average ranked application receiving funding priority.

(3) The first time an acronym is used, write out the full name followed by the acronym in parentheses in capital letters. Later, use only the acronym.

	10-15 pts - High	4-9 pts – Medium	0-3 pts - Low
<i>Deliverables and Outcomes</i>	Defines deliverables and outcomes which will achieve the national themes addressed by the project. Provides clear, quantitative measures of success.	Project deliverables are described, though how they are measured is unclear, or they are not easily measured. Project outcomes are vague and there is some question how they support project goals and national themes.	Insufficient detail is provided as to what the project deliverables and outcomes are. Unclear or no measures of success or whether the stated goals can be achieved.
<i>Collaboration/Cross Boundary</i>	Project uses coordination and partnerships with complementary state and federal programs to improve outcomes. Clearly describes how partners are committed and will add value during project development and implementation. Collaboration will clearly result in a successful cross-boundary project.	Collaboration with partners is identified but contribution to project or commitment to outcomes is limited. Discussion of how partners have been engaged is limited. Cross-boundary impacts are limited or unclear.	Very little of no collaboration appears to exist. The project does not appear to have a cross-boundary impact.

	7-10 pts - High	3-6 pts – Medium	0-2 pts - Low
<i>Forest Action Plan Integration</i>	Clearly describes the need for the proposed project and relates it to one or more priority landscapes, issues, areas, or strategies identified in the Forest Action Plan.	Need for the project is apparent but underdeveloped and/or link to Forest Action Plan is unclear.	Little to no information is provided as to why the project is a priority or how it relates to the Forest Action Plan.
<i>Meaningful Scale/Cross Boundary</i>	Scale of the project is clearly based on and is appropriate for the stated goals, objectives, and outcomes including cross boundary goals. The scale is sufficient to address the national theme and priority landscape and issues.	Scale of the project appears to be only partially based on or appropriate for the stated goals, objectives, and outcomes including cross boundary goals. The scale may not be sufficient to address the national theme and priority landscape and issues.	Scale of the project does not appear to be based on or appropriate for the stated goals, objectives, and outcomes including cross boundary goals. The scale is clearly not sufficient to address the national theme and priority landscape and issues.
<i>Sustainability of Outcomes</i>	Project clearly results in skills and enhanced capability that extend beyond the life of the project. Project displays how this investment will lead to a specific, quantifiable, cost effective, replicable benefit that addresses national themes.	Project may result in skills, enhanced capability beyond the life of the project, but it is limited or unclear.	Description does not address how the project will create lasting skills and capability. Project would be difficult to replicate elsewhere.