FY 2020 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. Each western State Forester will receive an online application portal password from WFLC staff for fiscal year (FY) 2020. Applicants create and submit their forms at www.forestrygrants.org/westernLSR.

Multi-State Proposals: If a state is participating in submission of a proposal for 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.

Submission deadline: All project proposals must be submitted by 5:00 p.m. MDT on Friday, September 27, 2019. Proposals submitted after this deadline will not be considered.

For more information, please contact:
Danielle Okst, CWSF/WFLC Associate Policy and Grants Director, 303.835.9911, dokst@westernforesters.org
Laura Schweitzer, CWSF/WFLC Executive Director, 303.835.0365, lschweitzer@westernforesters.org

GENERAL PROJECT ELIGIBILITY AND SIDEBARS

➢ State and Island Forestry Agencies are the only eligible applicants.
➢ Each state is limited to submission of 3 proposals. Each proposal is limited to a $300,000 request. No state will receive more than 15% of the total funds available to the West through this process.
➢ 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 alternately participate in a multi-state project and elect not to submit a multi-state proposal. This would allow the narratives to be unique to each state.
➢ 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 application 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 being set-aside.
➢ Research related activities cannot be paid for using LSR grant funds. Research involves testing a new theory or hypothesis, and the end product may be a new model that the researcher will be publishing. On the other hand, a research entity could be included as a partner, with their contribution included as

non-match leverage. Any research items included in a project description MUST explicitly outline their funding source as being from non-federal funds. Projects that use S&PF dollars to fund research are considered ineligible.

➢ Projects must focus on rural forest land, which is also considered nonindustrial private forest land or State forest land. For the purposes of this program, rural means any area other than an urbanized area such as a city or town that has a population of greater than 50,000 inhabitants ((7 USC 1991(a)(13) Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act). The term nonindustrial private forest land means land that is rural, that has existing tree cover or is suitable for growing trees, and is owned by any private individual, group, association, corporation, Indian Tribe, or other private legal entity. The term state forest land means land that is rural, and that is under state or local governmental ownership and considered to be non-Federal forest land.

➢ Projects that include collaboration among multiple entities are encouraged within the criteria.

➢ 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 (USFS) and other public land management agencies is encouraged; however, grant awards can only be used for work on non-federal land (non-federal land includes Tribal land).

➢ Projects are encouraged to be cross-boundary and include a combination of land ownerships. Cross-boundary may include any combination of ownerships including tribal, state and local governments, and private entities. It does not require the inclusion of federal land, however coordination with and proximity to other landscape-scale projects on federal or state lands is encouraged.

➢ Projects should seek to improve the delivery of public benefits from forest management by coordinating with complementary state and federal programs and partnership efforts when possible.

➢ Projects are encouraged to prioritize funding and other resources towards one or more objectives identified below, hereinafter referred to as "Landscape Objectives." Successful projects will, in many instances, address multiple objectives. (Source: National Guidance and Section 8102(e) of the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018)
  ○ Reduce the risk of uncharacteristic wildfires;
  ○ Improve fish and wildlife habitats, including for threatened and endangered species;
  ○ Maintain and improve water quality and watershed function;
  ○ Mitigate invasive species, insect infestation, and disease;
  ○ Improve important forest ecosystems;
  ○ Measure ecological and economic benefits including air quality and soil quality and productivity.

NATIONAL OVERVIEW

This document includes a summary of parts of the National Guidance. It is NOT meant to substitute the National Guidance. All applicants should also read the National Guidance, which can be found at:
https://www.thewflc.org/landscape-scale-restoration-competitive-grant-program/fy-2020-landscape-scale-restoration

Landscape Scale Restoration (LSR) replaces what was known as the Competitive Resource Allocation Process. Projects funded through LSR competitively allocated funds should include a focus on priority landscapes and should encourage the use of innovative cross-boundary approaches. "Cross-boundary" is meant to be defined broadly. Innovative projects should integrate State and Private Forestry (S&PF) programs and cross a 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 Landscape Scale Reporting (LaSR) system will be used for reporting accomplishments. Please see National Guidance for more specific requirements.

Forest Actions Plans, Cross-Boundary, and Landscape Scale

Projects must link clearly to the priorities outlined in State Forest Action Plans.

States may additionally use Forest Stewardship Priority Areas and other state or regional assessments and plans, including those completed by other agencies or partners, to help identify priority issues or landscapes. Projects are further encouraged to 1) address one or more of the national priorities found within the Landscape Objectives listed above, and 2) to coordinate with or be proximate to other landscape-scale projects on federal or state land to increase collaboration and overall impact.

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, the multi-state checkbox should be checked 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 and that state is not requesting funds, then that collaboration should be described in the narrative but the multi-state proposal checkbox should not be checked.

If applicants do choose to submit a multi-state proposal, the multi-state proposal checkbox must be checked 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 for each state. 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. If going with this option, each state participating should simply submit a unique narrative.

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 consistent 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, research related funds). Identifying sources of match and of non-match leverage is important in the reporting process for the use of these funds; information on these will be collected each fiscal year by the USFS.

Multi-year projects

Multi-year projects will be fully funded in a single year, i.e. the fiscal year of the project application. If it is not possible to undertake all work to achieve the goals of a project through a single LSR project application, each phase will need to compete as a new project application.

Eligibility Requirements – S&PF Program Authorities
Project proposals must meet the 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 provide 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 using LSR grant funds..

> *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, and the end product may be a new model that the researcher will be publishing. On the other hand, a research entity could be included as a partner, with their contribution included as non-match leverage. Any research items included in a project description MUST explicitly outline their funding source as being from non-federal funds. Projects that use S&PF dollars to fund research are considered ineligible.

Reporting
Once funded, all competitive projects will be required to provide data through the USFS LaSR system. Reports will be requested of the states by the USFS 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 for further information.

In addition, 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 USFS. Awarded applicants are required to complete this step after they receive their Funding Advice Letter from the USFS.

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 respective State Forester and USFS Regional Office). All efforts should be made to ensure substantive consistency with the initial application.

Ranking and Recommendations
The western interagency LSR team will review and rank proposals. The list of ranked projects and recommendations will be approved by the Western Forestry Leadership Coalition members. Once approved, the ranked list is forwarded to the USFS Washington S&PF Budget Office (WO). When the western allocation is decided for that fiscal year, the ranked list will be reconciled with the actual 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

Evaluation Criteria[2, 3]

	4-5 pts - High	3 pts – Medium	0-2 pts - Low
Project Overview/Purpose Statement *1,250 Characters* Description includes: ● location and importance of landscape; ● landscape need; ● high level overview of main goals, objectives, and deliverables; ● collaboration, boundaries, jurisdictions; ● amount of funds requested and total project value; and ● relationship to Forest Action Plan and any Landscape Objectives.	Provides a succinct and relevant project overview/purpose statement; clearly communicates the value of the project. Description covers all description elements in the left column.	Summarizes the project but the value of the project is not clearly communicated. Includes some of the description elements required for a high score, but lacks some.	Does not effectively summarize the proposed project. Does not include many of the description elements required for a high score.

	10-15 pts - High	4-9 pts – Medium	0-3 pts - Low
Context, Goals, and Objectives *2,500 Characters* Priority landscape is identified and an explanation is included that relays clearly how the project relates to the state Forest Action Plan, and possibly to any Landscape Objectives (reference to Landscape Objectives encouraged but not required). The need for treatment of the landscape is clearly explained, and the goals of the project are clearly addressed and linked to the needs. Project objectives are clearly identified, developed, and linked to project goals	Context clearly identifies priority landscapes and issues that are the focus of the project. Goals and objectives are explicitly explained and linked to state Forest Action Plan priorities, as well as any Landscape Objectives the project may address. The need for treatment of the landscape is clearly explained, and the goals of the project are clearly addressed and linked to the needs. Project objectives are clearly identified, developed, and linked to project goals.	Project context, goals and objectives are present, but underdeveloped. The priority landscape and link to Forest Action Plan are not adequately explained. The need for treatment of the landscape and the goals and objectives of the project are mentioned but underdeveloped.	Project context, goals, and objectives are unclear. The priority landscape and link to Forest Action Plan are not explained. The need for treatment of the landscape and the goals and objectives of the project are absent.

	14-20 pts - High	6-13 pts – Medium	0-5 pts - Low
Proposed Activities – And Budget *3,000 characters* Describes activities to be completed with grant funds and leveraged resources. Identifies project expenditures and links them to project goals, objectives, and activities. Match funds, their source, which goals they support and costs are detailed. Please note: Any research items included in a project description MUST explicitly outline their funding source as non-federal funds. Projects that use S&PF dollars to fund research are considered ineligible.	Clearly describes with specificity, activities to be completed with grant funds and leveraged resources. All project expenditures are explicitly identified and linked to specific project goals, objectives, and activities. Match funds, their source, which goals they support, and specific costs are well detailed.	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 or not fully described.	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-federal funding 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 handled in a manner consistent with the mechanism utilized in 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 will yield a ranked list of reviewed applications from 1 to *x* after scoring applications. The application rankings are averaged across the reviewers, with the highest average ranked applications 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
Deliverables and Outcomes *2,500 Characters* Project deliverables and outcomes are indicated. Project outcomes link to the state Forest Action Plans (and any Landscape Objectives identified as being addressed by the project).	Clearly lays out deliverables and outcomes and links them to achievement of state Forest Action Plan priorities, as well as any Landscape Objectives identified as being addressed by the project. Provides clear measures of success that are specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-bound.	Project deliverables are described, though how they will be measured and on what timeframe is unclear. Project outcomes are vague and the link to how they will support project goals and state Forest Action Plan priorities is present but underdeveloped.	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. No link is made to the state Forest Action Plan.
Collaboration/Cross-Boundary *2,500 Characters* Demonstrates partnership, conveys that regular meetings / dialogue of partners will be convened, cultivate organization of partners / landowners around around common goals/objectives, shares funding or resources, and generates commitment to working across boundaries for achievement of the project. Project proposal details prior collaborative work.	Project achieves all elements listed in the left hand column. Towards this end, it demonstrates use of 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. Clearly details prior collaborative work. Collaboration will clearly result in a successful cross-boundary project. High scoring projects may also coordinate with or be proximate to other landscape-scale projects on federal or state land to increase collaboration and overall impact.	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
Forest Action Plan Integration *2,000 Characters* Clearly describes how need for the project is directly linked to the state Forest Action Plan priorities. The landscape falls within a priority area identified in the state Forest Action Plan. Describes how project strategies align with strategies identified in state Forest Action Plan.	Clearly describes the need for the proposed project and relates it to one or more priority landscapes, issues, areas, or strategies identified in the state Forest Action Plan. May additionally use Forest Stewardship Priority Areas and other state or regional assessments and plans, including those completed by other agencies or partners to help strengthen the identification of priority issues or landscapes. Use of these other documents enhances the case for prioritization, but the linkage to the state Forest Action Plan must still be clearly established.	Need for the project is apparent but underdeveloped and/or link to the state Forest Action Plan is unclear. May include use of Forest Stewardship Priority Areas and other state or regional assessments and plans, including those completed by other agencies, but does not clearly link to Forest Action Plan.	Little to no information is provided as to why the project is a priority or how it relates to the state Forest Action Plan.

Page 7 of 8

FY 2020 Landscape Scale Restoration Competitive Process
https://www.thewflc.org/landscape-scale-restoration-competitive-grant-program/fy-2020-landscape-scale-restoration
Final Western Instructions, June 14, 2019

	7-10 pts - High	3-6 pts – Medium	0-2 pts - Low
Meaningful Scale/Cross Boundary *2,000 Characters* Scale (i.e. scope) 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 identified relevant priority landscape and issues from the Forest Action Plan, as well as any Landscape Objectives identified as being addressed by the project. Rationale for why the scope is meaningful is clearly articulated. May also coordinate with or be proximate to other landscape-scale projects on federal or state land as a means of enhancing the scope of the project.	Encompasses all elements detailed in the left hand column, including: scale (i.e. scope) 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 identified relevant priority landscape and issues from the Forest Action Plan, as well as any Landscape Objectives identified as being addressed by the project. Rationale for why the scope is meaningful is clearly articulated. May also coordinate with or be proximate to other landscape-scale projects on federal or state land as a means of enhancing the scope of the project.	Scale (i.e. scope) of the project appears to be only partially appropriate for the stated goals, objectives, and outcomes, including cross-boundary goals. The scale may not be sufficient to address the identified relevant priority landscape and issues from the state Forest Action Plan.	Scale (i.e. scope) of the project is not appropriate for the stated goals, objectives, and outcomes, including cross-boundary goals. The scale will not address identified relevant priority landscape and issues from the state Forest Action Plan.
Sustainability of Outcomes *2,000 Characters* Provides rationale for why dollars invested will sustain project outcomes into the future beyond project end date. Replicability to increase future impact is clearly outlined. Explains how development and/or strengthening of partnerships will also be a means of supporting project outcomes beyond the project end date.	Project clearly results in skills and enhanced capabilities 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 the priority landscape and issues from the Forest Action Plan, as well as any Landscape Objectives identified as being addressed by the project. Project results in resource sharing and cross-boundary / jurisdictional agreements that extend beyond project period.	Project may result in skills, enhanced capability beyond the life of the project, but it is limited or unclear how and whether this is anticipated to occur. Explanation of how the project could or will be replicated is underdeveloped. Minimal explanation of resource sharing, agreements, or other partnership strengthening extending beyond the project period.	Description does not address how the project will create lasting skills and capability. How the project would be replicated is not clearly indicated. No explanation of resource sharing, agreements, or strengthened partnerships exists.

FY 2020 Landscape Scale Restoration Competitive Process