



## WESTERN FORESTRY LEADERSHIP COALITION

*Figure 1 Western Forestry Leadership Coalition Logo*

# FY 2025 Landscape Scale Restoration Competitive Process National Overview and Western Guidance

## **Submission Deadline**

**All project proposals must be submitted by 5:00 p.m. Mountain Time on Friday, November 15, 2024. Proposals submitted after this deadline will not be considered.**

A maximum of five applications within each state/Pacific Island may be put forth for consideration by the multi-agency grant scoring panel. There is a separate national LSR Request for Proposals for federally recognized Tribes and Tribal organizations. Information for this Request for Proposals will be posted on the national LSR webpage and in [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov). Tribes may also apply to this regional process, but are encouraged to submit applications to the national Request for Proposals specifically for Tribes. Each Western State and Pacific Island Forester will receive an online application portal password from Western Forestry Leadership Coalition (WFLC) staff for fiscal year (FY) 2025. Applicants should contact their state/island forestry agency to apply. Proposals from previous years and the final submission grant portal are located at [www.forestrygrants.org/westernLSR](http://www.forestrygrants.org/westernLSR).

All associated western LSR documents can be found by visiting:  
<https://www.thewflc.org/landscape-scale-restoration-competitive-grant-program>.

**For more information, please contact CWSF/WFLC Competitive Grants Manager, Leena Visnak at [visnak@westernforesters.org](mailto:visnak@westernforesters.org).**

## **National Overview**

The State, Private, & Tribal Forestry (SPTF) Landscape Scale Restoration (LSR) competitive process is “intended to support high impact projects that promote collaborative, science-based restoration of priority forest landscapes, leverage public and private resources, and advance priorities identified in a State Forest Action Plan (SFAP) or other restoration strategy.”<sup>1</sup>

This document includes a summary of major provisions of the proposed [Landscape Scale Restoration Manual \(FSM 3800\)](#) (National LSR Manual) as applied to the West. It is NOT meant to substitute the National LSR Manual, but rather serve as a supplement to guide the application process in the Western U.S. All applicants should also carefully review the National LSR Manual, which can be found on the [Western LSR Webpage](#), as well as other information documents

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<sup>1</sup> Proposed Landscape Scale Restoration Manual (FSM 3800). The revised final directive is currently pending approval.

posted there. Applicants must abide by all requirements contained in the Western Guidance AND in the National LSR Manual.

## **Background of LSR**

LSR replaced what was previously known as the Competitive Resource Allocation Process. After LSR was codified in the 2018 Farm Bill, the National LSR Manual was published in the Federal Register. This USDA Forest Service (Forest Service) Manual takes the place of the previously utilized yearly national guidance documents. Projects funded through LSR competitively allocated funds should focus on priority landscapes and the use of innovative cross-boundary approaches. Innovative projects should integrate SPTF programs and include or be proximate to other land ownerships and management boundaries. “Cross-Boundary” does not require the inclusion of National Forest System (NFS) lands. In order to be consistent with SPTF authorities, if any federal lands (Bureau of Land Management, National Park System, NFS, etc.) are included in a landscape-level project, the applicant must ensure no SPTF LSR funds are spent on those federal lands and note this clearly within the project proposal.

## **SPTF Program Authorities**

LSR projects are delivered utilizing authorities in the [Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978](#) as amended. Allowable SPTF program authorities are Forest Stewardship, Rural Forestry Assistance, Urban and Community Forestry, Forest Health Protection, and Community and Private Land Fire Assistance (State Fire Assistance). Ineligible authorities: Rural Volunteer Fire Department Assistance (Volunteer Fire Assistance), Forest Legacy, Community Forest and Open Space Conservation, and Federal Lands Forest Health Management. Projects must align with a SFAP or equivalent state-wide restoration strategy.

- Some examples of eligible projects (non-exhaustive): Water quality and watershed health improvement; wildlife habitat improvement; demonstration projects that both achieve on-the-ground accomplishments for a specific area and also provide sites for conservation education and tech transfer; community tree planting projects in communities with a population of less than 50,000<sup>2</sup>; strategic outreach efforts to land managers/owners facing threats from urban sprawl, invasive species, and wildfire, and complementary efforts to improve rural prosperity, as long as the project also includes on-the-ground outcomes; cross-boundary fuels management projects that are adjacent to NFS lands; integrated efforts to improve management of nonindustrial private forest lands according to a SFAP; wildfire fuels management projects; reducing wildfire risk in the wildland-urban interface to protect high-value assets such as drinking water and community infrastructure; survey, prioritization, and treatment to control invasive plants in a high-priority landscape; prevention and preparedness projects with on-the-ground impacts in advance of known invasive pests outbreaks; special surveys and technical assistance for forest health issues with needs that exceed the resources available through core Forest Health Program (FHP) funding (for such projects, applications must clearly show how and why the

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<sup>2</sup> Conform to applicable Tree Planting Guidelines, which address accepted techniques for tree planting and maintenance. The number of trees to be planted, size of trees, and general description of the planting should be included in the application.

proposed activities complement the core FHP program in the state and must include on-the-ground outcomes); activities that engage the public in forest health work to achieve on-the-ground outcomes; or restoration of forests following damaging events.

### Priority Projects

Priority will be given to project proposals that include any of the following bulleted prioritization factors. Please see the scoring rubric at the end of this document to see the specific sections in which one or more of these priority factors should be detailed to receive priority points.

- Promote cross-boundary collaboration:
  - By their proximity to other land ownerships; or
  - By their inclusion of a combination of land ownerships, including tribal, State and local government, and private lands (such as, but not limited to, multiple private landowners; private and state landowners; state and federal landowners; state and local government; or state and Tribal landowners).
- Coordinate with or are in proximity to other complementary landscape-scale projects on NFS lands or lands under the jurisdiction of the Secretary of the Interior or a state that are carried out:
  - Under the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program (16 U.S.C. 7303).
  - In landscape areas designated for insect and disease treatments under section 602 of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6591a).
  - Under the Good Neighbor Authority (16 U.S.C. 2113a).
  - Under the stewardship end result contracting and agreement authority (16 U.S.C. 6591c).
- Coordinate with or are in proximity to other complementary landscape-scale projects on State land.
- Coordinate with Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) programs and appropriate state-level programs.
- Leverage funding from multiple entities.
- The term **disadvantaged communities** is used in *Executive Order 14008, Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad*. The [Interim Implementation Guidance for the Justice40 Initiative](#), released by OMB in July 2021, provides definitions on community and disadvantaged. Projects must include a description of the benefiting community or recipient and how the project benefits or engages underserved communities or people.

### Ranking and Recommendations

The western interagency LSR grants review team will review and score proposals. The review team is made up of 12 scorers, including six federal representatives and six state/island representatives. State and island representatives rotate every three years; federal representatives serve as scorers for indefinite periods, with the exception of the federal slot filled by a research station representative, which cycles western research stations on three-year cycles. No scorer may score any grant from their state or region. A computerized system generates a ranked list of proposals utilizing averaged scores from reviewers. The list of ranked projects is subsequently approved by WFLC and forwarded to the Forest Service Washington Office. Following the determination of actual funding levels

from annual appropriations, notices are sent from the Forest Service Washington Office to western SPTF Directors. A final list of funded projects is posted to the WFLC's [LSR webpage](#) and all applications, reviewer comments, and the ranked scoring report are made publicly available at [forestrygrants.org](https://forestrygrants.org).

### **Financial Award Requirements**

A non-state/island entity can receive funding through a state/island or directly from the Forest Service. A valid registration with the System Award Management (SAM) [www.sam.gov](https://www.sam.gov) is required. If an entity wishes to be directly granted funds, they will need to complete all Forest Service requirements and documentation to prove financial eligibility to receive federal funds directly. In these cases, entities must contact the relevant Forest Service Region prior to submission of their proposal to ensure they have completed and can demonstrate proof of completion of all financial eligibility requirements. Applications working on tribal land may choose to work through this regional process, but are encouraged to utilize the separate national tribal process which will be facilitated through Grants.gov. Any projects working on tribal lands through this regional process will need to be sure to abide by any applicable state laws and any direct granting requirements if funds are not able to be delivered through states' consolidated payment grant (CPG).

### **Multi-year projects**

Multi-year projects will be fully funded in a single year, namely 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.

### **Reporting**

All grant recipients are required to provide an annual report of accomplishments through the LSR database, referred to as LaSR. Accomplishments will also be recorded spatially by identifying discrete areas where on-the-ground implementation occurs during the life of the project. This reporting is in addition to the financial and performance reporting required by the grant.

### **Modifications to Grants**

Modifications to competitively-awarded grants (whether the project is an individual grant or part of a consolidated payment grant (CPG)) is handled between the signatories of the grants (i.e., the respective applicant, the State Forester, and Forest Service authorized official). All efforts should be made to ensure substantive consistency with the initial application.

## **Eligibility, Process, And Other Requirements**

### **Eligible Entities**

State and territorial forestry agencies (or an equivalent state agency), units of local government, federally recognized Indian Tribes, non-profit organizations (defined as a 501(c)(3)), Alaska Native Corporations, and universities are eligible to receive LSR funding. For-profit entities are not eligible to apply.

- Indian Tribe is defined in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 5304).

## Eligible Lands

Projects must achieve on-the-ground outcomes on rural forest land, which is also considered nonindustrial private forest land or State forest land or both (see [Proposed National LSR Manual](#)). For the purposes of this program, rural (as defined by 7 USC 1991(a)(13) Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act) means any area **other than** an urbanized area such as a city or town that has a population of greater than 50,000 inhabitants according to the latest census. Please refer to the [LSR Project Planning Tool Project Eligibility Tab](#) to confirm if the on-the-ground outcomes area of the project conforms to the requirements of being rural per the definition above. The term non-industrial 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, other private legal entity, or an Indian Tribe. 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. Section 8102 of the Farm Bill identifies land owned by an Indian Tribe in the definition of non-industrial private forest land. In accordance with a USDA legal decision, Tribal trust land held both by Tribes and individuals is eligible for LSR. Tribal land held in fee simple is also eligible. A separate tribal process and guidance will be posted on [Grants.gov](#). Tribal applications may opt to work through that separate tribal process OR they may opt to work with the state/island through this western process. While Tribes may also apply to this regional process, we encourage them to submit applications to the national Request for Proposals specifically for Tribes. Tribal land applications working through the state/island process must abide by all state law and/or requirements for direct delivery of their grant funds from the Forest Service.

## State Forest Actions Plans and Landscape Objectives

Projects MUST advance priorities identified in a [SFAP](#) or equivalent state-wide restoration strategy that is:

- complete or substantially complete;
- for a multi-year period;
- for non-industrial private forest land or state forest land;
- accessible by wood processing infrastructure; and
- based on the best available science.

A project proposal MUST be designed to achieve one or more of the following objectives<sup>3</sup> (Landscape Objectives):

- Reduce the risk of uncharacteristic wildfires;
- Improve fish and wildlife habitats, including habitats for threatened and endangered species;
- Maintain or improve water quality and watershed functions;
- Mitigate invasive species, insect infestation, and disease;
- Improve important forest ecosystems;
- Measure ecological and economic benefits including air quality and soil quality and productivity; and/or
- Take other actions as determined by the Forest Service.

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<sup>3</sup> Section 8102(e) of the 2018 Farm Bill and the National LSR Manual.

Proposals need to clearly state the link to a SFAP or equivalent state-wide restoration strategy AND to the achievement of one or more of the Landscape Objectives.

### **Project Benefits and Description of Benefiting Community**

Each proposal/application MUST include a description of how the project benefits or engages underserved communities or people AND a description of the benefiting community or recipients.

Project benefits may be social, ecological, or economic. Examples include but are not limited to:

- Watershed restoration efforts that improve or protect drinking water supplies in communities with persistent poverty.
- Hazardous fuels or forest health treatments that reduce risk to disadvantaged communities.
- Income opportunities (e.g., forest products or fuelwood) or employment generated by the project benefit disadvantaged communities.

The benefiting community or recipient could include demographics, and vulnerabilities such as health, economic, environmental, and climate impacts faced by the community. Data or evidence should support the proposal. Applicants may consider utilizing the national tools and datasets listed below or provide more localized knowledge such as tribal, local, or state data, to describe the populations and conditions that the project proposes to benefit. When the project locations are not known at the proposal stage, describe if and how equity and serving disadvantaged communities will be considered in selecting project locations/benefiting communities.

- **Persistent Poverty Counties:** The USDA Economic Research Service has defined counties as being persistently poor if 20 percent or more of their populations were living in poverty based on the 1980, 1990, and 2000 decennial censuses and 2007-11 American Community Survey 5-year estimates. See the [ERS County Typology Codes, 2015 Edition](#).
- [White House Council on Environmental Quality's Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool](#): This tool has an interactive map and uses datasets that are indicators of burdens in eight categories: climate change, energy, health, housing, legacy pollution, transportation, water and wastewater, and workforce development. The tool uses this information to identify communities that are experiencing these burdens. These are the communities that are disadvantaged because they are overburdened and underserved.

### **State Caps and Minimum and Maximum Funding Levels**

Five proposals total may be put forward for consideration within each state, which includes all eligible entities therein. The minimum funding request per project for all applicants is \$25,000 and the maximum is \$300,000; all funding is subject to change based on the availability of funds for the fiscal year. No state will receive more than 15% of the total funds available to the West.

- Funding available to the West for FY 2025 is based on the final FY appropriation from Congress for the LSR program and the funding allocation to the Forest Service Regions from the Forest Service Washington Office.
- An estimated maximum of \$300,000 will be put aside for the Pacific Island sub-competition, but is contingent upon availability of funds.

## Application Process

Entities wishing to apply should contact their state or island forestry agency regarding the submission of an LSR proposal. State and island forestry agencies may have earlier submission deadlines to accommodate internal selection processes and identify the five applications to be submitted to the regional portal. It is therefore imperative to inquire as early as possible with the relevant state agency/agencies regarding interest in submitting a proposal. The state/island forestry agency will select the five most competitive applications to submit to the west wide competition via the online portal. The selection process may vary by state or island forestry agency. Only those proposals submitted to the regional grant portal through the state/island forestry agency within each state will be considered final and undergo review by the multi-agency LSR grants review panel.

Each Western State and Pacific Island Forester will receive an online application portal password from WFLC staff for FY 2025. Proposals from previous years and the final submission grant portal are located at [www.forestrygrants.org/westernLSR](http://www.forestrygrants.org/westernLSR).

Tribal entities may route their proposal through the process outlined above, in which case the proposal would count towards the five applications per state cap along with all other applicants. Alternatively, Tribes may submit through the separate tribal process. Please see [Grants.gov](http://Grants.gov) for instructions specific to that process. You can also contact [SM.FS.LSR@usda.gov](mailto:SM.FS.LSR@usda.gov) or visit the [Forest Service's Landscape Scale Restoration website](#) for more information.

## Multi-State Proposals

Please see the multi-state proposal [directions](#) for detailed information on how to submit a multi-state proposal. For application purposes, the multi-state checkbox should be checked only if the project involves applicants from more than one state AND applicants from more than one state are requesting direct receipt of funds. If a project includes collaboration among entities from one or more states, but funds are only being requested to flow to an entity/entities within a single state, then that collaboration should be described in the narrative but the multi-state proposal checkbox should not be checked. If applicants choose to submit a multi-state proposal, the multi-state proposal checkbox must be checked on the application. An “applicants” menu will then appear, enabling applicants to add other participating states and contact information. The proposal will then 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’s application. The “lead” applicant is the state/island that begins the application and presses the “submit” button. There is no other distinction between lead and co-applicant(s). A multi-state proposal will count toward each state’s maximum submission of five, with each separate budget limited to a \$300,000 request. The proposal will be scored as a single application; however, if the project is recommended for funding, it would still be possible for one state/applicant to receive funds and another not, due to the 15% cap.

- States/applicants can alternatively participate in a multi-state project and choose not to submit a multi-state proposal. In this case, an application can be submitted from each state separately, each with unique narratives.
- A Tribal entity with a project spanning across states may pick a ‘lead state’ and submit a proposal according to the process outlined above, working through the state/island forestry agency. This would count against the five application cap for the lead state. A

Tribe may also submit to several states, with separate budgets for each Tribal application in each state. The five application cap for each state would apply. In all the above scenarios, the 15% cap per state would apply to selected proposals.

- Non-state/island entities that would like to apply for a multi-state project should indicate so in their proposals to the relevant state/island forestry agencies. All state/island forestry agencies where the project will take place should be contacted, and the non- state/island entity can coordinate a multi-state proposal as outlined above or elect to not submit a multi-state proposal and apply separately through each state.

### **Pacific Islands**

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](http://www.forestrygrants.org) web portal and have the same deadlines and guidance. Projects submitted by the Pacific Island agencies will be submitted and scored with all other applications. Successful Pacific Island projects of \$200,000 or less per project will be funded via set-aside funding up to a total project pool of \$300,000, contingent upon the availability of funds. This offers an opportunity for smaller projects from Pacific Island applicants to compete for portions of the set-aside funds.

When/if those funds are exhausted, any remaining Pacific Island proposals will compete as normal with other submissions for funding. Any Pacific Island projects requesting funding greater than \$200,000 will not be eligible for participation in the sub-competition and will compete and be funded within the regular Western LSR process. Any funding not used in the Pacific Island sub-competition will be returned to the regular Western LSR funding pool.

### **Matching Requirements**

Match for the LSR grant program must be met by eligible and allowable costs and is subject to match provisions in grant regulations (see [Federal Regulations Title 2 Part 200.306](#) and [Subpart E for Cost Principles](#)). Proposals from non-Pacific Islands require a 1:1 match (cash and/or in-kind contributions) from the state forestry agency (or an equivalent state agency), unit of local government, non-profit organization (defined as a 501(c)(3)), Alaska Native Corporation, university, or Tribal grant recipient. Match must be derived from non-federal sources. For applications from the Territory of Guam, Territory of American Samoa, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Republic of Palau, Republic of the Marshall Islands, or the Federated States of Micronesia, a 1:1 match on funds received in excess of \$500,000 is required as governed by statute.<sup>4</sup>

- Matching requirements for dollars awarded through the competitive allocation process will be handled consistent with CPG methodology utilized with state/island forestry agencies. Cash and in-kind contributions for project elements that do not fall within SPTF program authorities may not be used as match. Other “non-match” leveraged funds do not need to meet the same

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<sup>4</sup> Note the proposed [Landscape Scale Restoration Manual \(FSM 3800\)](#) does not include the Territories of Guam and American Samoa, but the revised final directive (pending approval) will reflect the applicable statutes. The 1:1 match waiver on projects of \$500,000 or less is applicable to all six Pacific Islands, including the Territories of Guam and American Samoa. As of April 2021, the amount was changed from \$200,000 to \$500,000.



standards (e.g., may include funds for construction, funds from other federal partners, and research-related funds).

- **Leverage:** A project proposal must maximize grant funding by using it to leverage contributions from non-Federal entities. Federal entities may contribute as non-match leveraged contributions. All contributions should be clearly identified as to their third-party source and whether the contribution is match or (non-match) leverage 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 required each fiscal year by the Forest Service. Projects that leverage funding from multiple entities will be given priority.

### **Authorities and Allowable Costs**

Project proposals must meet the requirements of SPTF Program Authorities (see previous section) and Office of Management and Budget cost principles. We encourage collaboration between applicants and the Forest Service to avoid eligibility issues. Below are some common cost-related issues:

- **Construction** is not an allowable cost (grant or match) under current SPTF 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 SPTF 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 meet all grant application 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** costs may be allowable with prior approval by the awarding agency office (Forest Service Region). Applicants must abide by the CFR for pre-approval. Please make specific mention of this approval within the application; verification of this approval will occur if the project is selected. Equipment approvals will be only granted on equipment associated with the restoration of landscapes. The LSR program is not designed to upgrade equipment or to replace equipment that is outdated unless associated with a new restoration-based project.
- **Direct Landowner payments**, such as cost-share, reimbursement, and other types of payment provided directly to private landowners are not allowable costs; however, LSR funding (and match) may be used to perform work on private lands.
- **Research activities** are not allowable costs. Basic research is defined in 2 CFR 422.1 as “Systematic study directed toward fuller knowledge or understanding of the fundamental aspects of phenomena and of observable facts without specific applications towards processes or products in mind.” Research involves testing a new theory or hypothesis, and the end product may be a new model that the researcher will be publishing. A research entity may 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 (not match or LSR grant funds). Projects that use SPTF dollars to fund research are considered ineligible. Note: Technical transfer, education, and outreach activities associated with applying research can be included in the application. Additionally, while a project proposal may include a component of outreach, education, and training as a means to achieve the project objectives, education and outreach should not be the sole project outcome.

## **Application**

Please visit the western [LSR webpage](#) for online instructions, a fillable application worksheet (for drafting and partner outreach use only - all applications must be completed and submitted through the [forestrygrants.org](#) grant portal), and other helpful reference documents.

## **Project Duration**

A project proposal should indicate the duration of the project using the checkboxes within section 2. Project proposals can indicate a multi-year implementation timeframe of up to three (3) years. Funding, however, will be limited to delivery in the fiscal year of the application.

## **GIS Coordinates**

Please follow the [GIS instructions](#) and ensure the on-the-ground outcomes fall within eligible rural land types as described earlier in this guidance.

## **Project Overview/Purpose Statement**

The project overview should contain the location and importance of the landscape, landscape needs, high-level overview of main goals, collaboration, boundaries, jurisdictions, the amount of funds requested and total project value, the relationship to a SFAP (or equivalent state-wide restoration strategy), and at least one of the Landscape Objectives. This section should show how the project will address LSR's purpose statement "to encourage collaborative, science-based restoration of priority forest landscapes."

## **Context, Goals, and Objectives**

Context should clearly identify priority landscapes and issues that are the focus of the project. Goals should be clearly explained and should relate to the SFAP or equivalent restoration strategy. The need for treatment of the landscape should be explained, and the goals of the project should be clearly addressed and linked to the needs. Describe how the proposal is designed to achieve one or more of the Landscape Objectives listed below. Link the project goals to the relevant Landscape Objective(s).

Landscape Objectives may include one or more of the following:

- Reduce the risk of uncharacteristic wildfires;
- Improve fish and wildlife habitats, including habitats for threatened and endangered species;
- Maintain or improve water quality and watershed functions;
- Mitigate invasive species, insect infestation, and disease;
- Improve important forest ecosystems;
- Measure ecological and economic benefits including air quality and soil quality

and productivity.

### **Proposed Activities and Budget**

Clearly describe activities to be completed with LSR grant funds, match, and leveraged resources. All project expenditures should be explicitly identified and linked to the activity, which should link to project goals and objective(s). The source of match and non-match leveraged funds should be specified and costs should be well detailed. The financial contributions of partners should be documented clearly under match and non-match leverage. Projects that leverage match and non-match funding from multiple entities will be given priority. Please note: any funds for construction, research, or other activities not allowable for grant or match; proposals MUST therefore clearly outline all funding sources. Projects that propose use of SPTF dollars or match to fund ineligible activities under SPTF authorities will be considered ineligible.

### **Deliverables and Outcomes**

The deliverables (specific target/result) and outcomes (impact of completing the project) should relate to achievement of one or more Landscape Objectives and a goal, strategy, or desired future condition within the SFAP or equivalent state-wide restoration strategy. Clearly describe all planned deliverables and outcomes, how they relate to measurable science-based restoration of landscapes, and what metrics the applicant plans to use to measure progress towards these outcomes.

Each LSR project must accomplish at least one of the on-the-ground national quantitative measures listed below and may include additional specific measurable results. Proposed metrics should be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and timely. Successful projects will be required to measure progress towards their stated outcomes within the LaSR reporting system using the national quantitative measures on the next page. Also available on the [Western LSR Webpage](#).

<b>Quantitative Accomplishment</b>	<b>Description</b>
Acres of hazardous fuels management	Acres treated to reduce or mitigate hazardous fuels including prescribed fire, thinning, and other actions that reduce hazardous fuels and mitigate fire risk.
Acres treated to enhance wildlife habitat	Acres of forest treated to improve wildlife and fish habitat. Threatened and endangered species that will benefit from project activities should be included in the narrative accomplishments.
Miles of riparian forest treated to enhance wildlife habitat	Miles of riparian forest treated to improve wildlife and fish habitat. Threatened and endangered species that will benefit from project activities should be included in the narrative accomplishments.
Acres of trees and seedlings planted to enhance water quality	Acres of trees and seedlings planted to improve water quality including planting to create riparian buffers, floodplain restoration, and other actions that enhance water quality/quantity.
Miles of riparian forest treated to enhance water quality	Miles of riparian forest treated to improve water quality including riparian buffer establishment or maintenance and other actions that enhance water quality. This does not include any structural enhancements or construction (e.g., culverts).
Number of trees, saplings, and/or seedlings planted to enhance water quality	Number of trees, saplings, and/or seedlings planted to improve water quality including riparian buffers, floodplain restoration, and storm water management actions that are non-structural. Specify size of trees planted and describe the plan for tree care to maximize survival.
Acres treated for insects and disease	Acres treated for insects and disease including through chemical, mechanical, and biological actions that improve forest health conditions.
Acres invasive plant/weed Management	Infested acres treated for invasive plants including chemical, mechanical, and biological actions that improve forest health conditions. This does not include acres surveyed.
Acres under new forest stewardship or other forest management plans	Acres under a new forest management plan. A forest management plan could include a Tribal forest management plan, Forest Stewardship Plan, CAP 106 plan, Tree Farm plan, tax abatement plan, or equivalent state forest, watershed, or landscape plan. If a landscape plan, the plan must focus on discrete/specific geography such as a watershed and is not state-wide.
Number of forest landowners reached through technical assistance	Forest landowners reached through technical assistance in more than one interaction and known to have benefited in some significant and lasting way (e.g., developed or implemented a forest management activity or practice). This does not include a landowner who simply attended a technical or training session without any follow-up or were spoken to only once, such as over the phone, with no follow-up.
Tons of pulpwood or biomass produced (economic benefit)	Tons of pulpwood or biomass produced that contribute to the forest products industry.
Board feet of logs/sawlogs produced (economic benefit)	Board feet of logs/sawlogs produced that contribute to the forest products industry.

## **Cross-Boundary Collaboration**

Projects must identify partners that are actively engaged and add value towards project planning and implementation. Collaboration may be qualitative in nature and the contribution of the partners may be more important than the number of partners involved in the projects. Financial contributions should be detailed under match (for eligible costs, entities, and lands) and additional non-match leveraged contributions (if non-match leveraged funds are included in a proposal) within the budget. Note that while collaboration and coordination with Forest Service or other public land management agencies is encouraged, grant awards can only be used for work on non-federal land. Projects should seek to improve the delivery of public benefits from forest management by coordinating with complementary state and federal programs and partnership efforts where possible. Priority will be given to projects that do so. Projects promoting cross-boundary collaboration will also be given priority, whether through proximity to other land ownerships or by the inclusion of a combination of ownerships (including tribal, state and local government, and private lands (such as multiple private landowners, private and State landowners; state and federal landowners; state and local government; and state and Tribal landowners)) within the project area.

The application should address all applicable elements listed below and demonstrate use of coordination and partnerships with complementary state and federal programs to improve outcomes:

- Proposals should clearly identify partners that are actively engaged and add value towards project planning and implementation;
- Collaboration, both qualitative and quantitative, should be explained in detail. Some examples of how collaboration can be demonstrated include:
  - Regular meetings/dialogue of partners will be convened, describing how the project cultivates organization of partners/landowners around common goals/objectives, sharing of funding or resources, partnering on previous successful projects/history of prior collaborative work, explaining how the project generates commitment to working across boundaries for achievement of the project.
- Proposals should describe how the project promotes cross-boundary collaboration;
- Detail any coordination with or proximity to other complementary landscape-scale projects on NFS lands, or lands under the jurisdiction of the Secretary of the Interior or a state, that are carried out under the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program, the Good Neighbor Authority, stewardship end result contracting and agreement authority or in landscape areas designated for insect and disease treatments under section 602 of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003;
- Detail any coordination with or are in proximity to other complementary landscape-scale projects on state land; and
- Detail any coordination with NRCS programs and appropriate state-level programs.

## **Forest Action Plan Integration**

A proposal must demonstrate how the objectives of the project will help achieve the priorities in the SFAP or other state-wide restoration strategies. Describe the need for the proposed project and relate it to one or more significant priority landscapes, issues, or strategies identified in the SFAP or equivalent state-wide restoration strategy. Describe how the project will bring a state, region, or area to a desired future condition, goal, or strategy as articulated within the SFAP or equivalent state-wide strategy. Thoroughly

explain the alignment that exist between the proposed actions and the SFAP, that emphasizes why the proposal is needed in that location and is supported by the best available science.

- If utilizing another state-wide restoration strategy, please detail the completeness, the multi-year period, accessibility by wood processing infrastructure, relevant scientific basis, and verify it covers non-industrial private forest land or state forest land as defined within the Western Guidance and the National LSR Manual.

### **Meaningful Scale**

A project proposal must describe the project area, the land ownerships within the area, and specific areas targeted for treatment. This should include a description of the current land type and use. The scale of a project must be the most appropriate size based on the land ownerships, objectives, and outcomes (including cross-boundary goals) for the landscape. Detail how the scale is sufficient to address the identified relevant priorities from the SFAP (or equivalent state-wide restoration strategy) and the Landscape Objective(s) being addressed by the project. Clearly articulate the rationale for why the scale is meaningful and science based.

### **Description of Benefits**

A proposal must include a description of how the project benefits or engages underserved communities or people. This description of benefits may include social, ecological, or economic.

A proposal must include a description of the benefiting community and/or recipients. This description could include demographic and vulnerabilities that are supported by data or evidence. Applicants should include national tools and data sets or utilize localized knowledge such as tribal, local, or state data to describe the populations and conditions that the project proposes to benefit. *When the project locations are not known at the proposal stage, describe if and how equity and serving socially vulnerable or underserved populations will be considered in selecting project locations/benefiting communities.*

### **Sustainability of Outcomes**

Provides rationale for why dollars invested will sustain project outcomes into the future, beyond the project end date (some examples: enhanced skills or learning, replicability, future plans related to the SFAP or equivalent restoration strategy which build upon this successful project, etc.). Explain how development and/or strengthening of partnerships may also be a means of supporting project outcomes beyond the project end date. Describe how the project results in resource sharing or cross-boundary collaboration or agreements (formalized agreements hold greater weight) that extend beyond the project period. Technical transfer is the sharing of knowledge, tools, and innovations for practical application. Projects must describe how others will learn from project implementation, including the project's potential to inform practitioners and enhance the effectiveness of similar initiatives. Knowledge and technical transfer should aim to share innovation across landscapes. While projects may include a component of outreach, education, and training as a means to achieve the project goals, these elements should not be the sole anticipated outcome.

## **Project Proposal Criteria**

Please note for applications: 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. All project proposals will be screened and evaluated based on the following:

<b>Screening Criteria</b>		
Meets all project eligibility, requirements, and SPTF authorities <sup>5</sup>	Yes = Eligible	No = Ineligible
Meets the 1:1 non-federal match requirement <sup>6</sup>	Yes = Eligible	No = Ineligible
Rural eligibility: Population less than 50,000 inhabitants according to the latest Census <sup>7</sup>	Yes = Eligible	No = Ineligible

<b>Evaluation Criteria<sup>8</sup></b>	<b>4-5 pts - High</b>	<b>3 pts - Medium</b>	<b>0-2 pts - Low</b>
<p><b><i>Project Overview/Purpose Statement</i></b>  <b><i>1,500 Characters</i></b>            Description includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• location and importance of landscape;</li> <li>• landscape need;</li> <li>• high level overview of main goals and deliverables;</li> <li>• collaboration, boundaries, jurisdictions;</li> <li>• amount of funds requested and total project value; and</li> <li>• relationship to Forest Action Plan (or equivalent state-wide restoration strategy) and at least one Landscape Objective.</li> </ul>	<p>Provides a succinct and relevant project overview/purpose statement; clearly communicates the value of the project. Description covers all elements listed in project overview instructions.</p>	<p>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 others.</p>	<p>Does not effectively summarize the proposed project. Does not include many of the description elements required for a high score.</p>

<sup>5</sup> Prior to final submission into the forestrygrants.org portal on the submission confirmation screen, you will be asked to affirm all eligibility and other requirements have been met. Failure to select this affirmation or in any way not meeting the requirements laid out within the National LSR Manual and Western Guidance will result in a disqualification determination process. Applications deemed ineligible will be removed from the rankings.

<sup>6</sup> 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.

<sup>7</sup> [LSR Project Planning Tool](#); use this map to see if an area falls within a recognized rural area per the definition provided in the National Guidance.

<sup>8</sup> Only full point scores: 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. The highest average ordinal ranked applications receiving funding priority.

**Table 2 Context Goals and Objectives & Proposed Activities and Budget**

	<b>7-10 pts - High</b>	<b>3-6 pts Medium</b>	<b>0-2 pts - Low</b>
<p><b>Context, Goals, and Objectives</b></p> <p><i>2,500 Characters</i></p>	<p>Context clearly identifies priority landscapes and issues that are the focus of the project. Goals are explicitly explained. The need for treatment of the landscape is explained, and the goals of the project are clearly addressed, and linked to the needs. Describes how the proposal is designed to achieve one or more of the Landscape Objectives. The project goals are linked to the relevant Landscape Objective(s).</p>	<p>Project context and goals are present, but underdeveloped. The priority landscape and issues are not adequately explained. The need for treatment of the landscape and the goals of the project are mentioned but underdeveloped/ the linkage of the goals to the needs is not well established. A Landscape Objective is referenced, but how the project is designed to achieve that or the linkage to the goals are unclear or lacking.</p>	<p>Identification of priority landscapes and issues that are the focus are absent. Linkages between or entire reference to goals or landscape need are mostly absent. Description of how the proposal is designed to achieve a Landscape Objective is incomplete or absent.</p>
	<b>14-20 pts - High</b>	<b>6-13 pts – Medium</b>	<b>0-5 pts - Low</b>
<p><b>Proposed Activities and Budget</b></p> <p><i>3,250 characters</i></p> <p>Priority points will be awarded to projects that leverage funding from multiple entities.</p> <p>Please note: any funds for construction, research, or other activities not allowable for grant or match fund use MUST explicitly outline their funding source as non-match leverage funds. Projects that use SPTF dollars to fund ineligible activities under SPTF authorities will be considered ineligible.</p>	<p>Clearly describes activities to be completed with LSR grant funds requested and leveraged resources- both match and non-match. All project expenditures are explicitly identified and linked to the activity- which should link to your project goals and objective(s). The source of match and non-match funds are specified, and costs are well detailed. The financial contributions of partners must be documented clearly under match and non-match leverage.</p>	<p>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.</p>	<p>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</p>



**Table 3 Deliverables and Outcomes**

	<b>10-15 pts - High</b>	<b>4-9 pts – Medium</b>	<b>0-3 pts - Low</b>
<p><b>Deliverables and Outcomes</b>  <b>2,500 Characters</b></p> <p>Proposed metrics should be SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and timely)</p> <p>See on-the-ground national quantitative measures chart for specific outcome categories and metrics. A high score requires planning to accomplish at least one landscape objective and a goal, strategy, or desired future condition in the Forest Action Plan.</p>	<p>Clearly describes all planned deliverables and outcomes, how they relate to measurable science-based restoration of landscapes, and what metrics the applicant plans to use to measure progress towards these outcomes. Clearly describes the on-the-ground metric to be used to measure progress and the metrics used are SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and timely).</p>	<p>Project deliverables are described, though how they will be measured and on what timeframe is unclear. Project outcomes are vague and the on-the-ground metrics for progress are missing some elements of SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and timely).</p>	<p>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. Does not specify on-the-ground metrics to be used or metrics are missing all SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and timely) elements.</p>

**Table 4 Cross-Boundary Collaboration**

	<b>10-15 pts - High</b>	<b>4-9 pts – Medium</b>	<b>0-3 pts - Low</b>
<p><b>Cross-Boundary Collaboration</b></p> <p><b>3,250 Characters</b></p> <p>Priority points will be awarded to projects that: Promote cross-boundary collaboration (proximity to or inclusion of multiple land ownerships); and/or coordinate with/are in proximity to other complementary landscape-scale projects on NFS lands or other lands under the jurisdiction of the state (specific programs outlined in ‘Priority Projects’ section);and/or coordinate with or are in proximity to other complementary landscape-scale projects on State land; and/or coordinate with NRCS programs and appropriate state-level programs. <b>Note:</b> while collaboration and coordination with FS or other public land management agencies is encouraged, grant awards can only be used for work on non-federal land.</p>	<p>Clearly identifies partners that are actively engaged and add value towards project planning and implementation. Describes sufficient factors demonstrating collaboration. Collaboration may be qualitative in nature and the contribution of the partners may be more important than the number of partners involved in the projects. Projects that sufficiently describe partnership factors outlined within this box but do not clearly describe at least one of the priority factors for cross-boundary coordination or collaboration to the left of this box will only be able to receive a maximum score at the lowest end of the high score range (10 points).</p>	<p>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.</p>	<p>Very little or no collaboration or coordination with other programs appears to exist. The project does not appear to have a cross-boundary impact (neither proximity to other land ownerships or inclusion of a combination of land ownerships).</p>

**Table 5 Forest Action Plan Integration**

	<b>7-10 pts - High</b>	<b>3-6 pts – Medium</b>	<b>0-2 pts - Low</b>
<p><b>Forest Action Plan Integration</b></p> <p><b>2,250 Characters</b></p> <p>If utilizing another state-wide restoration strategy, please detail the completeness, the multi-year period, accessibility by wood processing infrastructure, relevant scientific basis, and verify it covers non-industrial private forest land or state forest land as defined within the National LSR Manual.</p>	<p>Proposal clearly demonstrates how the objectives of the project will help achieve the priorities in the SFAP or other state-wide restoration strategy. Specifically describes the need for the proposed project and relates it to one or more significant priority landscapes, issues, or strategies identified in the SFAP or equivalent state-wide restoration strategy. Well formulated description of how the project will bring a state, region, or area to a desired future condition, goal, or strategy as articulated within the Forest Action Plan or equivalent state-wide strategy. Thoroughly explain the alignment that exist between the proposed actions and the SFAP, that emphasizes why the proposal is needed in that location and is supported by the best available science.</p>	<p>Need for the project is apparent but underdeveloped and/or link of objectives to the SFAP (or equivalent state-wide restoration strategy) is unclear. How the project will bring a state, region, or area to a desired future condition, goal, or strategy as articulated within the Forest Action Plan or equivalent state-wide strategy is lacking.</p>	<p>Little to no information is provided as to why the project is a priority or how it relates to the SFAP (or equivalent state-wide restoration strategy).</p>

**Table 6 Meaningful Scale**

	<b>7-10 pts - High</b>	<b>3-6 pts – Medium</b>	<b>0-2 pts - Low</b>
<p><b>Meaningful Scale</b></p> <p><b>2,000 Characters</b></p>	<p>Provides complete description of the project area, the land ownerships within the area, and specific areas targeted for treatment. Includes a description of the current land type and use. Clearly describes why the scale of the project is the most appropriate size based on the land ownerships, objectives, and outcomes (including cross-boundary goals as applicable) for the landscape. Details how the scale is sufficient to address the identified relevant priorities from the Forest Action Plan (or equivalent state-wide restoration strategy) and the Landscape Objective(s) being addressed by the project. The rationale for why the scale is meaningful and science based is clearly articulated.</p>	<p>Provides description of the project area, the land ownerships within the area, and specific areas targeted for treatment. Missing some elements in describing why the scale of the project is the most appropriate size based on the land ownerships, objectives, and outcomes (including cross boundary goals) for the landscape. Description of how the scale is sufficient to address the identified relevant priorities from the Forest Action Plan (or equivalent state-wide restoration strategy) and the Landscape Objective(s) being addressed by the project may be lacking. Rationale for why the scale is meaningful is limited or explanation lacks clarity.</p>	<p>Lacks proper description of the project area, the land ownerships within the area, and specific areas targeted for treatment. Description of why the scale of the project is the most appropriate size based on the land ownerships, objectives, and outcomes (including cross boundary goals) for the landscape or of how the scale is sufficient to address the identified relevant priorities from the Forest Action Plan (or equivalent state-wide restoration strategy) and the Landscape Objective(s) being addressed is absent. Overall, does not make the case for why the scale is appropriate and meaningful.</p>

**Table 7 Description of Benefits**

	<b>4-5 pts – High</b>	<b>3 pts – Medium</b>	<b>0-2 pts – Low</b>
<p><b>Description of Benefits</b></p> <p><b>2,500 Characters</b></p> <p>Must include descriptions of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Benefiting community and or recipients.</li> <li>• How the project benefits or engages underserved communities or people.</li> </ul>	<p>Provides complete, clear, and concise descriptions of the project benefiting communities and how the project benefits or engages underserved communities or people. Data and/or evidence are used to support descriptions.</p> <p>Projects showing direct benefit(s) and/or intentional engagement of historically underserved communities will be given full points in this category.</p>	<p>Provides a description of the project benefiting communities and how the project benefits or engages underserved communities or people, but the benefit(s) or engagement are not direct or intentional.</p> <p>Data and/or evidence are provided but do not fully support the descriptions.</p>	<p>Lacks proper description of the project benefiting communities and how the project benefits or engages underserved communities or people and is missing data and/or evidence to support the description.</p>

**Table 8 Sustainability of Outcomes**

	<b>7-10 pts – High</b>	<b>3-6 pts – Medium</b>	<b>0-2 pts - Low</b>
<p><b>Sustainability of Outcomes</b></p> <p><b>2,000 Characters</b></p> <p>Technical transfer is the sharing of knowledge, tools and innovations for practical application. Projects must describe how others will learn from project implementation including the project’s potential to inform practitioners and enhance the effectiveness of similar initiatives. Knowledge and technical transfer need not necessarily be between states but should aim to share innovation across the landscapes of importance as relevant.</p> <p>Please note: While projects may include a component of outreach, education, and training to achieve the project goals, these should not be the sole outcome.</p>	<p>Provides rationale for why dollars invested will sustain project outcomes into the future beyond project end date. Explains how development and/or strengthening of partnerships may also be a means of supporting project outcomes beyond the project end date (project may result in resource sharing or cross-boundary collaboration or agreements (formalized agreements hold greater weight) that extend beyond the project period).</p> <p>Project must describe how others will learn from project implementation including the project’s potential to inform practitioners and enhance the effectiveness of similar initiatives (see ‘technical transfer definition within the left box). High scoring projects will clearly outline this technical transfer element.</p>	<p>Rationale for why dollars invested will sustain project outcomes into the future beyond project end date is limited or not clearly explained. Sustainability regarding partnerships is underdeveloped. Technical transfer may be mentioned, but the proposal does not effectively describe how it will enhance the effectiveness of similar initiatives.</p>	<p>Rationale for why dollars invested will sustain project outcomes into the future beyond project end date is severely lacking. No technical transfer described.</p>