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TO: Northeastern Area State Foresters

**FY2011 Northeastern Area (NA) State and Private Forestry (S&PF)
Competitive Allocation Request for Proposals**

PROPOSALS DUE COB FEBRUARY 1, 2011

The Northeastern Area (NA) and the Northeastern Area Association of State Foresters (NAASF) are committed to advancing process improvements that support our mission delivery through well-informed decision-making and operational efficiency. A request for proposals (RFP) process has been designed to provide greater program integration in the allocation of funds to partners and improve operational efficiencies by reducing duplicated review procedures. This RFP will focus Federal investments on issues, challenges, opportunities, and priority landscapes of national, regional, and/or State importance. State strategies will be used to identify project priorities and meaningful outcomes achievable through an integrated program delivery.

Available Funding

Funding authorities designated for this NA RFP include Urban and Community Forestry (U&CF), Forest Stewardship (FS), Fire, and Forest Health (FH). This RFP replaces these previously separate RFP processes: National State and Private Forestry (S&PF) Competitive Resource Allocation (“Redesign Grants”), Hazard Mitigation, and the national FH special projects and other FH discretionary efforts. Available funding does not include, nor does it affect, core program funding for the programs.

The intent is to consider and fund both large and small projects. There is no limit on the number of proposals (single or multistate) any one State can submit. However, it is recommended that smaller projects be “bundled” to create a larger project. Therefore, a minimum project proposal amount of \$30,000 in Federal funding has been established. The maximum amount of Federal funding that will be awarded to any one State via this competitive process is \$1.5 million.

Eligibility

In FY2011, State Forestry agencies are eligible to submit or authorize proposals (pass-through direct to partners) for consideration under this competition. Nonprofit organizations, universities, and other partners must submit proposals through the State Forester. State Agriculture agencies or other organizations with State Forest Health program responsibilities can submit proposals through the State Forester or they can submit them directly with a letter of concurrence from the State Forester.



Additional information:

- Where appropriate, States are encouraged to develop multistate projects in collaboration with other State Forestry agencies and partners. However, multistate proposals will receive no preferential consideration in this process as they are rated and ranked.
- S&PF funds available through this RFP are only to be spent on projects conducted on non-Federal lands.
- Projects proposed through this process may extend or expand upon other work supported by Federal funds. However, activities and accomplishments must be tracked and reported separately.
- Projects may span up to three (3) years, with full funding committed at the time of award.
- Funds to be passed through to third-party recipients must be clearly identified with the name of the organization, contact information, and funding amount. Third-party pass-through funding amounts will count towards a State's total allocation.

Proposal Requirements

FY2011 NA S&PF Competitive Allocation RFP applications will proceed for ranking only if they meet the required elements below:

A. Link to the Statewide Forest Resource Strategy, and national and regional priorities.

In 2010, each State and the District of Columbia completed a State Forest Assessment and Strategy. These documents outline priority issues and landscapes within each State and are available at http://www.stateforesters.org/issues_and_policy/forests_in_the_farm_bill. Project goals must address and be clearly linked to resource objectives and/or priorities in the State Forest Strategy by referencing the State Strategy page, section, or strategy number(s). For multistate projects, the proposal needs to link to the State Forest Strategy of each State involved.

Project goals must be clearly linked to one or more of the National State and Private Forestry Priorities: (1) conserve and manage working forest landscapes for multiple values and uses, (2) protect forests from threats, and (3) enhance public benefits from trees and forests. Project goals should also be linked to other national or regional priorities, as relevant, such as the U.S. Forest Service Strategic Plan (2000), National Roadmap for Responding to Climate Change, NA Strategic Plan Update for 2008-2012, NAASF Strategic Plan, Landscape Scale Conservation in the Northeast and Midwest (12/16/09), and other relevant national or regional planning documents. These documents are available for reference at <http://www.na.fs.fed.us/rfp>.

- B. Required matching funds (50/50 minimum).** The match must be met by eligible and allowable costs and is subject to match provisions in grant regulations. See http://ecfr.gpoaccess.gov/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=ecfr&tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title07/7cfr3015_main_02.tpl (Subpart G).
- C. Appropriate/authorized use of Federal funds.** It is recommended that applicants review “*The Principal Laws Relating to USDA Forest Service State and Private Forestry Programs,*” particularly the sections related to the funding sources for this RFP, which are available at <http://www.fs.fed.us/spf/coop/library/SPF-CF%20handbook.pdf>.

Criteria for Proposal Selection

- 1. Significant Issue or Concern (30 points):** Demonstrates a focus on a significant issue or concern in the jurisdiction to be addressed.
 - Proposal is clearly linked to State, regional, and/or national objectives and priorities.
 - Proposal should move the applicant to a desired future condition as articulated in the State Strategy.
- 2. Measureable Results and Significant Outcomes (30 points):** Goals and achievements of the project effect positive changes. The proposal:
 - Has a clear statement of purpose
 - Influences or results in positive change on the ground and/or in the policies that guide conserving and managing trees and forests
 - Produces results/outcomes at a scale and cost appropriate to the statement of purpose
 - Maximizes return on investment and leverages resources
 - Produces residual positive benefits of the project (capacity, skills, knowledge, infrastructure, or approach is replicable)
- 3. Capacity to Succeed (10 points):** Exhibits a capacity to succeed in the time frame proposed.
 - Reasonable balance between administration and technical assistance
 - Uses effective approaches to sustainable forest resource conservation, protection, and/or enhancement
- 4. Technical Soundness (10 points):** Demonstrates a technically sound approach to addressing resource issues.
 - Technical methods and tools are appropriate for achieving expected outcomes
 - Qualifications of the organization and staff involved

Project Submission and Selection:

The FY2011 NA S&PF Competitive Allocation RFP application is enclosed. Please submit proposals in PDF format to the following e-mail inbox: **na-rfp@fs.fed.us**, **no later than close of business on February 1, 2011**. Required information for the proposal should not exceed five (5) pages (excluding budget tables and concurrence letter), with a print font size of 12 preferred. Note: the proposal submission inbox can accept messages up to 4 MB in size. Multiple messages per proposal may be submitted if necessary. Additional information such as maps, tables, and letters of support may be included in addition to the proposal. For assistance submitting proposals to the inbox, contact Terry James at trjames@fs.fed.us or (610) 557-4107.

Projects will be selected collaboratively by NAASF and NA leadership. Applications submitted by States will be reviewed, evaluated, and prioritized by an interagency competitive review team with a one-to-one ratio of Federal to State representatives. The number of team members will be determined based on workload. A preliminary review of the proposals will be conducted to identify incomplete applications and assign potential funding eligibility based on the project's scope of work.

The interagency competitive review team will complete the review of proposals and develop a recommended list of projects by March 1, 2011. The recommended list of proposals will be submitted to the NAASF Executive Committee and NA Director for their approval. The NA Executive Team will then identify the appropriate mix of program funds and compile the FY2011 grant list with funding sources. Projects ranked but not funded will receive further consideration by the NAASF Executive Committee and the NA Director should additional funds become available.

Additional Resources for Proposal Development

During proposal development, we encourage applicants to consult with NA Field Representatives and Field office staff, and Cooperative Fire Staff in Newtown Square. They will help develop proposals that are most relevant to the selection criteria given the applicant's objectives and project focus. Past experience has shown that this consultation results in higher-quality proposals and more collaboration between similar efforts. In addition, the Northeastern Area will host Webinar(s) to explain the RFP process and provide technical assistance related to proposal development.

If there are questions regarding the types of projects or components that can be considered, please contact the appropriate NA Field Office Representative:

- Barb Tormoehlen – St. Paul, MN at (651) 649-5276 or btormoehlen@fs.fed.us
- Bob Lueckel – Morgantown, WV at (304) 285-1540 or rlueckel@fs.fed.us
- Terry Miller – Durham, NH at (603) 868-7694 or twmiller@fs.fed.us

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State Foresters and NA Leadership will continue to work together towards achieving the best possible outcomes for competitive processes such as this opportunity. Three central components of the competitive process are reassessment, monitoring, and flexibility. State Foresters and NA will closely evaluate the effectiveness of the RFP competitive process and institute changes as necessary in FY2012 and beyond.

Sincerely,

/s/ Kathryn P. Maloney
KATHRYN P. MALONEY
Area Director

Enclosure

cc:

NA Executive Team
NA State Departments of Agriculture
NAASF Cooperative Forest Management Committee
NAASF Forest Health Committee
NAASF Forest Resource Planning Committee
NAASF Urban and Community Forestry Committee
NAASF Northeast Forest Fire Supervisors Committee