



News Release

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Southern New Mexico Resource Advisory Committee seeks proposals for forest projects

SILVER CITY, NM; March 16, 2016 – For Immediate Release – The Southern New Mexico Counties Resource Advisory Committee (RAC) is calling for proposals for Title II Special Projects on Federal Lands under the 2015 Reauthorization of the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000. Deadline to submit the project proposal packet is close of business April 15, 2016.

The primary location for projects is intended to be on federal lands on the Gila and Lincoln National Forests, (all districts) and on the Magdalena Ranger District of the Cibola National Forest. However, projects can be on non-federal lands within Catron, Grant, Lincoln, Otero, Sierra, or Socorro counties where projects would benefit resources on or people using the National Forest. Title II project funds are awarded on a competitive basis to federal agencies, state and local governments, and private and non-profit entities for projects that improve the maintenance of existing infrastructure such as roads, trails, recreation facilities or projects that improve forest health and restore and improve land health and water quality. Each project proposal will be evaluated on cost-effectiveness, extent of partner involvement, and benefits to ecosystem health. At least 50% of funds shall be used for watershed restoration or enhancement, or for projects that maintain, decommission, or obliterate roads and trails, per the legislation.

The following types of projects are eligible:

- Road, trail, and infrastructure maintenance or obliteration
- Soil productivity improvement
- Improvements in forest ecosystem health
- Watershed and stream restoration and maintenance
- Restoration, maintenance, and improvement of wildlife and fish habitat
- Control of noxious and invasive weeds
- Re-establishment of native species

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Potential applicants need to discuss their proposal with the closest District Ranger before submitting an application, since the proposal must have District Ranger support before it can be considered for funding. The Act allows RAC funds to be used for the costs of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analysis or for on-the-ground project implementation. All project proposals for on-the-ground project work must be NEPA sufficient at the time of submission.

The estimated Title II funds available for projects in eligible counties are as follows: Catron County \$172,600; Grant County \$60,625; Lincoln County \$27,900; Otero County \$49,200; Sierra County \$91,220; and Socorro County \$54,790.

Please ensure all required items are included in the project proposal packet. Project proposals for the Southern New Mexico RAC can be submitted: 1) online at <http://cloudapps-usda.gov/force.com/FSSRS/CreateNewProjectPage?rac=001t0000002JcwZAAS>; 2) by USPS mail; or 3) email. The forms can be found on the Gila National Forest website at: <http://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/gila/home/?cid=FSEPRD495079>.

The Southern New Mexico RAC will review and recommend funding of project proposals in May 2016. The public is welcome to attend the RAC meeting. A date and time for the meeting will be announced in a news release in local newspapers and will be published in the Federal Register. For more information on the RAC Committee or about proposing projects please contact:

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