

**REGION 6 – PACIFIC NORTHWEST
UMATILLA NATIONAL FOREST
FIRE AND FUELS CAREER ORIENTATION CAMP**

SUBMITTING REGION/AREA	SUBMITTING DISTRICT/UNIT
Region 6	Umatilla National Forest
CONTACT RESPONSIBLE FOR THE PROPOSAL:	
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<u>Brief Description of the proposal:</u>	
<p>Establishment of a Fire and Fuels Career Orientation Camp at the Tupper Work Center on the Heppner Ranger District on the Umatilla National Forest. The work center is located in a forested setting, approximately 45 miles from the rural community of Heppner, Oregon. The Umatilla National Forest is a high complexity fire forest with a wide diversity of natural fuels reduction projects.</p> <p>The Umatilla National Forest will work in partnership with state and federal agencies and local school districts to identify minorities and people with disabilities in the 17-18 year age group that may have an interest in a career in fire and/or fuels management. Participation in the program of under represented groups is anticipated to be approximately 75%. The Career Orientation Camp would work with communities and school districts adjacent to the Umatilla National Forest such as the Morrow County School District and Hermiston School District. Both of these school districts are located in areas that have rapidly expanding populations with a high percentage of under represented groups as part of their student body.</p> <p>The program will focus on minorities and persons with disabilities that are currently high school students in their junior or senior year. Emphasis will be to conduct the Career Orientation Camp early in the school year to coincide with our prescribed fire seasons. The one week fire and fuels orientation will focus on wildland fire suppression and natural fuel reduction techniques. Students will also gain an orientation to the wide variety of natural resource careers within the agency. The session will cover hiring processes to educate the students on career opportunities and how to pursue both temporary and permanent employment with the agency. Community college and university representatives will be involved to discuss higher education opportunities to the students.</p> <p>The program will also foster student interest in pursuing careers in natural resources and higher level education in natural resources, fire, and fuels. The camp would host approximately 16 students annually, with the objective of bringing diversity into the workforce of the Umatilla National Forest located in Oregon and Washington and to provide a more diverse applicant pool for fire/fuels positions in locations throughout the Region.</p>	

What is the total contribution being requested from F&AM for this proposal?

We are requesting a total of \$72,500 annually to establish and conduct the camp, recruit students, follow up with school districts/students throughout the year, and establish and foster long term relationships with partners.

If you have funding levels within the proposal, provide that information:

If additional funding were available, we could facilitate additional students into seasonal positions. (For a cost of approximately \$6,000 per student). Fire managers from throughout the Blue Mountain Forests would be invited to the camp to meet students and discuss career opportunities on adjoining National Forests.

The Regional/Area Fire Director’s signature certifies concurrence

PHONE #:

District Ranger (if appropriate):/s/ Thomas Mafera	541 676 2110
Forest Fire Program Manager (mandatory): /s/William C. Aney	541 278 3727
Forest Supervisor (mandatory):/s/ Kevin D. Martin	541 278 3752
Regional Representative to F&AM WDC (mandatory): /s/ LuAnn Grover, National F&AM WFDC Regional Representative	503 808 2238
Regional/Area Fire Director (mandatory): /s/ J.A. Kendall Snell, Director, F&AM Region 6	503 808 2145

1. Workforce Diversity Management:

- a. Workforce Planning – this proposal addresses workforce planning by identifying positions and opportunities to bring new employees into the workforce in a profession that continues to experience very active movement of employees. Eighty percent of our permanent workforce comes through the portal of temporary employment. There are currently abundant opportunities for placement and advancement in the fire and fuels workforce, and with the availability of firefighter retirement, we are seeing continued opportunities for advancement. Fire and fuels is the single largest source of new seasonal jobs on the Umatilla National Forest, and this proposal is designed to improve the diversity of the work force within the Northeast Oregon and Southeast Washington forests by exposing youth to careers in fire and fuels before they enter college or the workforce.
- b. Outreach - An outreach strategy has already been initiated on the Forest to complement this proposal, using a partnership with local school districts. To date Morrow County School District (approximately 37% Hispanic and 12.5% students with disabilities) has expressed interest in assisting with recruitment, career counseling and logistics. Hermiston School District has also expressed interest and is evaluating how the program would fit into their school curriculum. The Fire and Fuels Career Orientation Camp will bring fire managers, college representatives, and students together to develop personal relationships and help with the recruitment and hiring/selection of the following season’s STEP or 1039 employees. In addition, this proposal should complement the Regional Outreach and Recruitment Strategy being developed. When it is complete, there will be opportunities to work within the Region’s strategy, strengthening the effectiveness of our own outreach results.
- c. Recruitment – Recruitment efforts will coincide with outreach efforts and recruiters will

utilize referrals from those organizations connected to our outreach efforts. In addition, this proposal should complement the Regional Outreach and Recruitment Strategy being developed. When it is complete, there will be opportunities to work within the Region's strategy, strengthening the effectiveness of our own outreach results.

- d. Hiring and Selections - The coordinator of the Career Orientation Camp will track statistics of participants, along with statistics of outreach and recruitment efforts in order to provide for a baseline to measure success. Hiring and selections will be made utilizing the referrals provided from our outreach efforts and applicants will be given appropriate consideration in the selection process. The Umatilla FLT is committed to hiring up to 4 STEP students that have come through this program each summer, using the STEP authority and contacts with regional colleges to identify and hire these employees.
- e. Retention - The intent is to identify students with an interest in fire/fuels early in their life and place them into seasonal positions shortly after graduation and during their college years. Students will learn about agency hiring processes and opportunities such as the Student Career Experience Program. Camp coordinators will follow up with candidates throughout the school year to answer questions and encourage them to pursue a fire/fuels career. The objective of the follow up will be to maintain face to face relationships through quarterly meetings with students. The coordinator will serve to keep the interest of students on the goal of obtaining the skills needed for a permanent position and to work with families to share information about career opportunities.

2. Management Support:

This proposal is being developed by the Umatilla National Forest. It is fully supported by the Forest Supervisor, the Forest Fire Staff Officer, the Heppner District Ranger and the Umatilla National Forest Leadership Team. The Forest Leadership team sees this project as a means of increasing the number of minority employees in the seasonal workforce seriously interested in Fire Management as a career. The Forest will commit to placing a minimum of 4 interested students in our seasonal workforce each year, across the forest. In addition, the Regional Fire Director as well as the Region Civil Rights Director support this proposal.

3. Scope and Sustainability:

This proposal would stimulate the interest of students in natural resource careers and provide year round contact with the Forest Service to nurture the interest. Program managers would have increased options for bringing diversity into their seasonal and permanent workforce. This three year grant proposal would help the Fire and Fuels Career Orientation Camp get established.

The anticipated annual cost is intended to remain reasonable in order to ensure the future sustainability of the program beyond this grant cycle, as other grant opportunities would be pursued to sustain funding into the future. Contributed funding from the Umatilla National Forest would entail contributed funding for fire and fuels employees that serve as instructors for the camp. The Career Orientation Camp will also reach out to fire managers within the region to provide students with contacts for career opportunities beyond the Umatilla National Forest. It is our intent that

broadening this scope will also broaden the base of potential long term support from other wildland fire agencies in our area, both in terms of financial support and in program leadership.

The Career Orientation camp would provide fire managers the ability to groom interested candidates for consideration for seasonal hiring. The Tupper Work Center provides all of the facilities necessary for a camp of this size. The Work Center is also situated on a Forest that lends itself to the quality training and development of fire/fuels personnel due to the fire complexity and active prescribed burning program. The Umatilla National Forest has several districts that are located in remote areas. Remote duty stations often experience a fair amount of turnover as employees advance in their careers or move to less remote locations. Thus, the Umatilla is a quality training ground for new employees and puts us into an excellent position to provide entry level permanent positions in fire.

Students that complete the camp, are accepted at an institution of post-high school education, and are then hired as a STEP or seasonal employee at a Ranger District will be eligible to be hired the following season. Each year the Umatilla NF fire program itself hires 20-30 temporary/student employees to work on hand crews, engine crews, rappel crews, in a fire lookout, or in a dispatch center. While this project would bring 12 students into the workforce over the three years, a sustained level of four new students per year into the temporary seasonal workforce is clearly sustainable over the long term.

4. Partners & Shared Funding/Resources: If the proposal includes partnerships with other organizations, describe how it will benefit minority and/or disabled organization partners. List the partners, their share of funding and/or resources towards your project, and note if their funding is confirmed or not. If funding is not confirmed, list a date funding is expected to be confirmed.

If the proposal does not include shared partners, indicate “not applicable to this proposal.”

Partner Name(s)	Federal (i.e. BIA, Forest Service Tribal Relations, Forest/Region, etc.)	Partner Non-Federal (Urban League, NAACP, Volunteer Fire Dept., etc)	Funding Confirmed? (Y/N)	If funding not confirmed, provide date for funding to be confirmed
Morrow County School District		Local Area High Schools	Yes*	March 2007
Hermiston School District		Local Area High School	No+	May 2007
Umatilla National Forest	\$39,000**		Yes	March 2007
Oregon Department of Forestry		State of Oregon \$2000-4000	Yes***	March 2007
What are the Regional contributions towards this proposal?	****			
WO-WDC request	\$72,500		N	
Totals	\$111,500 Annually	\$2-4,000 Annually		

* Morrow County School District would be involved as a partner by assisting with recruitment/outreach, career counseling, and transportation to the camp, logistics of getting students cleared for participation, working with parents, and working on a means to offer academic credit for participating students as part of their School to Work Program.

+ Hermiston School District is interested in being involved in a similar capacity as the Morrow County School District. The District will be evaluating how the proposal will mesh with their curriculum in April of 2007.

** The Umatilla National Forest financial commitment is in the form of contributed personnel time to conduct the camp.

*** Oregon Department of Forestry will partner by providing instructors and equipment to support the field exercises associated with the camp.

**** Regional contributions would include the use of Regional Level II recruiters and Civil Rights Point of Contacts to solicit best practices to be used in outreach efforts.

4. Integration with Civil Rights and Human Capital Management Professionals:

HCM:

The Career Orientation Camp will network with key Region 6 Level II recruiters to identify potential candidates for the camp and for assistance in developing strategies to reach local community and to train one or two Umatilla National Forest employees to serve as community contacts, relationship builders, and coordinators with the schools and local community groups.

CR:

In working with CR professionals, we were able to develop this project to accomplish two of the overall Region 6 Civil Rights strategies and four of the five priorities:

- Contributes to a diverse temporary workforce, which feeds directly to permanent workforce
- Provides for an inclusive workforce through teamwork of permanent workforce
- Contributes to the Regional workforce diversity composition by focusing our outreach and recruitment efforts on under-represented groups specifically located in our neighboring communities
- Contributes to the diversity of the technical workforce, specifically within the F&AM workforce
- Increases awareness of employment opportunities for people with targeted disabilities, and
- Our goal to establish local outreach and recruitment sources contributes to building relationships with under-represented communities.

5. Management Directive (MD) 715:

Under-representation within the PNW region:

Technical Workforce: African American men and women, Hispanic men and women, Asian Pacific Islander men and women, Non-Minority women, and People with Targeted Disabilities.

This proposal will focus on Hispanic as an under-represented group due to the increase in the Hispanic population as well as a focus on American Indian populations to develop and maintain a healthy relationship with the American Indian people within our geographical area.

Barrier:

The lack of relationships with minority organizations lost opportunities for the Forest to tap into local minority and disability communities as the minority populations grew, specifically the Hispanic population. This proposal gives the Forest the ability to develop local student interest in Forest Service careers with a focus on our Hispanic community. Successful retention would be accomplished through the students connection with local cultures, helping to remove barriers associated with remote work location.

Action:

1. Identify one or two current Umatilla employees who can seek out local minority and disability communities and establish and maintain relationships;
2. Develop and implement a presentation/overview of the Forest Service, which can be used in outreach and recruitment purposes; and
3. Develop a local outreach and recruitment strategy, which will meet the goals of providing for a diversity of representation within this program.
4. Show that the Umatilla National Forest can provide a value to the local minority community through mentoring, guiding, and employing their youth.

Morrow County School District currently is comprised of approximately 37% Hispanic students. It also has approximately 12.5% students with disabilities. (Source: Morrow County School District)

Umatilla County (Hermiston, OR) is the 24th fastest growing county in the Nation. The most populous and fastest growing minority population is Hispanic. Also, within the potential relevant recruitment area is Walla Walla, WA and Tri-City WA, which is also seeing a huge increase in the Hispanic population. Within a 75 mile radius of the Umatilla NF, there is an 11% minority population to draw from and numerous organizations to help with identifying potential candidates with disabilities. (Source: US Census)

6. Measurement of Success:

Success will be measured in the following manner(s):

1. Number of new relationships built with the local under-represented community;
2. Number of minority and disabled students participating in the Career Orientation program;
3. Number of partners;
4. Number of minority and disabled students placed in STEP or 1039 positions (or for our partner agencies, an equivalent seasonal position);

5. Number of minority and disabled students in the pipeline for permanent positions;
6. Career Orientation evaluations completed by students will show an interest in working for the Forest Service;
7. Overall increase in minority and people with disability within the permanent and temporary workforce; and
8. Outreach and recruitment is focused and reflects the goal of the program.