

## **FY 2017 Landscape Scale Restoration Request for Proposals Reviewers' Comments**

### **1. FY17 MI-014**

#### **Every School in the Forest**

- Great project. Like link to Project Learning Tree and Tree Farm and hands-on education for school kids. Will this be replicable elsewhere? A lot of support. Match a bit loose and wonder if this will sustain itself after grant?
- Good proposal. Well written. Not sure working with K-12 kids will solve your "problem" of working with old, white guys since my suspicion is they make up the bulk of your Michigan forest landowners. I wish you luck if this gets funded.
- Well written. Clear focus and intent.
- No issues.

### **2. FY17 IL-001**

#### **Bringing Forests Back**

- Ten cities is a nice scale project. Ten communities are identified and reasonable costs at \$17K per city. No funded partners.
- Good project. Good to see Sierra Club as a partner.
- Accomplishments targeted.
- Good partnership for inventories and goal setting; little on-the-ground action.

### **3. FY17 VT-029**

#### **Cultivating a Community of Forest Stewards: Invasive Plant Management through Volunteer Engagement and Support**

- The potential for leveraging this grant's efforts through middle school populations is immense. I almost wonder if components of this could be combined with New Hampshire's invasive management proposal...?
- Innovative invasive species project by including schools. Good use of schools and State Parks to expand forest health outreach. Outcomes seem exaggerated (treat 210 acres yet protecting 450,000 acres?) and do not include data on students. Several partners but only one with small funding. Will schools actually use the developed curriculum? Proposal would be stronger if schools owned forest land with invasives on their own land.
- Proposal overestimates likely measureable results.
- In collaboration section: some treatments to be identified and will occur on Green Mountain National Forest — not permissible under Stewardship authorities. "Green Mountain National Forest (GMNF) — assist with identification of target areas on GMNF."

**4. FY17 IA-007**

**Working Watersheds: Reducing Nutrient Loads and Increasing Water Quality through Forest Management**

- Overall a good project with detailed outcomes and delivery methodology. Relying on a lot of partner collaboration but didn't explain how that would occur. Also, expectations of success are based upon seedling success with no guarantee. A lot of tech transfer potential.
- Proposal seems to be all over the map on expected deliverables. Needs a better focus.
- Good project; designed for compelling reasons.
- Well-articulated and diverse technology transfer component. Outreach goals well aligned with project goals and plan.

**5. FY17 IL-004**

**Ensuring Forest Health for the Future: Prioritized Forest Management through Regional Partnerships**

- There is potential for the initial outcomes of this grant to persist based on the membership fees, making it more self-sustaining than its predecessor.
- Detailed project. Good partnerships. Like the public involvement component and the idea of stewardship clusters and connecting fire and invasives. A lot of "moving pieces" so this may be hard to coordinate. Seemed like there might be an issue with match.
- Significant accomplishments targeted. Match from Habitat Stamp Grant?
- Other Federal costs as match? Little details on the treatments although a 3400-2 form is provided.

**6. FY17 IA-005**

**An Integrated Approach to Mitigate and Manage Invasive Plants in Forested Landscapes**

- Good involvement of State Parks. Budget and match are not explained. Not landscape scale at 200 acres treated and rather expensive at \$536/acre.
- Good tangible demonstration project that could be replicated in other States.
- Good project, but the question is why target this particular State Park, and these particular acres? What makes these acres stand out as a test area, if invasives are widespread? The only (partial) explanation was in Park Ranger Dave Sunne's letter of support, but it seems like a little more explanation on "targeting" is needed.
- Well-written proposal, but is this a research project? Is there really a need for a new pub on common invasive species? Seems to be more about awareness raising than any control efforts.
- Specific invasive species are not identified and no 3400-2 form for treatments is provided. The proposal seeks to compare the efficacy of prescribed fire versus pesticides to control invasive species without a control site. The proposal, however, does not offer a replicated study design that could produce sound, scientifically based recommendations.

**7. FY17 MA-019**

**Forest Pest First Detectors in Priority Landscapes**

- Straightforward. Uses tools created elsewhere, so not very innovative, but will be a good long-term investment.
- Decent accomplishments for a relatively small Federal investment.
- A good conservation education and forest health survey/detection project. For Massachusetts, suggest they include emphasis on ALB too, not just EAB. Also suggest they target priority areas in State. No mention of lessons learned from other States' experiences (e.g., Vermont) and no mention of long term after the Landscape Scale Restoration (LSR) project.
- Not clear in proposal how this network will be nurtured and developed once LSR funding is gone. Not tied to lessons learned from similar initiative completed in Vermont. Cost of Web site is underestimated.

**8. FY17 MI-012**

**Economic Contributions of the Forest Products Industries in the 20 Northeastern States**

- Large-scale collaboration (including Canada) focused on highlighting forest products and their economic value.
- Ability to get match from 17 States?
- Need to identify Nebraska portion of support by West. Challenge will be need to document match from 17 NA States and Nebraska.

**9. FY17 IA-006**

**Forestry For the Birds – Iowa Driftless Area**

- The strength of this proposal is directly related to the dire situation in the Driftless Area, which has undergone a dramatic decline in forested cover.
- Like the tie in with the State's wildlife action plan. Good proposal.
- Bird monitoring and maps seem to be useful – other components feel like business as usual. Proposal feels padded and less focused than would have been desirable.
- Well-articulated technology transfer goals to forester/natural resource audience. Intent to use data to increase birding tourism adds to communications value. Similar project funded FY15; what was learned and why repeat?

**10. FY17 IA-008**

**Block by Block: Transforming Disaster into Community Engagement**

- Good deliverables but expensive for outcomes. Has combination of removal, disposal, and replanting. Is there community support over time?
- Ambitious project to impact 45 unidentified communities for \$300K. Forty-five urban forest management plans at reasonable cost of \$6,666 per community. Summary budget does not explain labor or match. Partner budget tables are not complete, consistent, or correct. Difficult to evaluate collaboration and outcomes when cities are not identified. Can applicant deliver all 45 in 3 years? Would prefer to have all 45 cities identified at time of proposal.
- Very good project. Expensive, but best model for addressing EAB "reality" on a broad scale. Would prefer to see some nongovernmental organization partners too.
- Well-articulated and diverse technology transfer component. Utilization aspect will require planned communications/marketing for the lumber produced.

**11. FY17 MA-020**

**Rebuilding the Massachusetts Coastal Pine Barrens: Aligning Restoration, Conservation, and Management**

- This proposal lists a diverse array of partners and focuses on re-establishing the pine barren habitat on the Mid Cape. If successful, this project would likely enjoy sustained support from the surrounding communities.
- Includes cutting of a red pine stand.
- Equipment purchase should be supplies. Note: A drone is being purchased.

**12. FY17 PA-026**

**Restoration of Ecosystem Function in Fire-Dependent Forest Communities in Pennsylvania**

- Innovative fire to restore specific and unique ecosystems. Excellent matching funds (State investment in the project). Moderate scale at 2,500 acres. Cost effective at \$80/acre.
- There were several partners listed that appear to have no financial commitment in the project.
- No issues.

**13. FY17 NY-033**

**Using Trees to Improve Water Quality in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed**

- This is a very ambitious proposal, but could result in significant training and outreach to municipal staffs, while also raising awareness across many communities about the relationship between forests and water quality.
- Clearly a priority and well connected to the Forest Action Plan. How successful will [the] link to landowners be?
- No issues.

**14. FY17 CT-038**

**Parcel-Level Climate Adaptation in the MassConn Woods: Tools for Foresters, Actions by Landowners**

- Good number of partners.
- This is basic landowner assistance and should be covered by State core program. Project tries to draw attention through use of climate adaptation terminology – but it's really just basic sound forest management.
- No issues. Should be a multistate proposal.

**15. FY17 IL-002**

**Urban Forest Data Sharing for Collective and Individual Improvement – Chicago Region**

- This proposal offers an opportunity to maximize the multitude of existing datasets for the benefit of communities with fewer resources. Once established (through this grant), the Morton Arboretum would fund continual development and deployment of the tools.
- Will the online interactive tool be widely accessible to the target audience?
- A good project. It would help if the proposal discussed the “strong demand” for an online, easy-to-use tool of this nature. I don't get the sense that the lack of this tool is a “limiting factor,” particularly if the Morton Arboretum or the broader CRTI [Chicago Region Trees Initiative] community is willing to help in generating maps for willing partners.
- New platform proposed for application only in Chicagoland region, when existing platforms funded by the U.S. Forest Service may already exist to manage data as proposed; suggest study off-shelf software. Redundant software?

**16. FY17 NH-015**

**New Hampshire Invasives Academy: Developing a Trained Network**

- Addresses an area of great concern and seeks to connect a diverse assortment of New Hampshire residents to engage in this training and work. However, without sustained funding, it is not clear how the actual work would continue.
- One concern is a limited target audience.
- Important to determine if tech transfer efforts lead to on-the-ground results. Maintenance of network is not addressed.

**17. FY17 MN-024**

**Our Dynamic Forest Canopy: Continuous Satellite Mapping of Minnesota's Forests in Three Dimensions**

- Remote sensing — definitely landscape scale. Strong tech transfer potential. How will this affect and motivate landowners? Only two workshops and field days! Didn't say how they'd share outside Minnesota.
- Project is good in design. The technology is new and apparently robust and that is good, but it translates into a very expensive Landscape Scale Restoration proposal for the additional benefits received over and above existing Minnesota forest resource data.
- Question redundancy of tool to Forest Inventory and Analysis and cost of long-term maintenance.

**18. FY17 MA-021**

**Promoting Habitat Friendly Forestry and "Foresters for the Birds" Wood Products**

- Good marketing component working off Foresters for the Birds staffing and Web site. Well thought out and good connections to Forest Action Plan.
- No issues.

**19. FY17 NY-032**

**Building Relationships with Private Forest Owners Neighboring New York State Forests**

- Innovative stewardship by focusing on landowners at the public-private ownership boundary. No funded partners. Expensive outreach to 250 landowners at \$711 per landowner. Five State Forest locations not identified.
- I really liked this concept. I would have liked to have seen an estimate of the acres that would be impacted as well as the number of landowners. It would have been helpful to indicate the in-kind labor match (dollar value) you were getting in the Collaboration or Leverage sections of the application.
- Concerns about standardized measures, eradication methods, and methods for the identification of partners.
- No issues.

**20. FY17 MA-022**

**Grassroots Tree Planting in Three Small, Low Income Cities within Rural Massachusetts**

- Good collaboration and leverage of trees. Budget explanation not correct unless recipient is contracting to itself. Three small cities is not a very large landscape. \$300,000, almost entirely for labor to plant 3,600 trees, is rather expensive when AmeriCorps volunteers are available to partners for cost-effective tree planting. Why create a municipal nursery that may or may not succeed when commercial nurseries are available?
- Cost/benefit concerns.
- Unique development model. Sustainability of three new nonprofits is unclear. Total cost appears too high for replication and transfer.

## 21. FY17 VT-031

### **Maintaining Forest Integrity: Planning Tools to Minimize Loss and Fragmentation**

- Innovative (incorporation of) urban land use planning resources. However, since forest integrity in land use planning is now mandated by State law (HB 789), most of the project activities will occur in the absence of the Federal investment. Is applicant match \$13,000 (table) or \$143,000 (explanation)? How will that match be generated? "Other" match of \$120,000 is not explained. Contractual match of \$85,000 is not explained. Partner budget tables do not agree with summary budget table. Outcomes are unbelievable and not related to the project – how will this Federal investment of \$218,000 result in \$364 million, 6,200 jobs, 4.1 million acres conserved, etc.? How will applicant measure cause and effect? What are the other \$500,000 in funds to be leveraged? Project appears to only enhance existing products.
- Good, tangible demonstration project that could be replicated in other States.
- Good project. Worth a try. Northern Research Station "Future of the Northern Forest" identified unplanned development as one of the top threats to forest land in the U.S. over the next 50 years.
- Would be helpful if proposal defined what it meant by "forest integrity."
- No issues.

## 22. FY17 PA-027

### **Developing Urban Wood Utilization Opportunities in Partnership with Vo-Tech Schools**

- Small scale but very focused with good deliverables for money investment. Tech transfer seems good. Good pilot project.
- Small project but great learning opportunity for the students!
- Questions regarding eligibility of grant funding for "construction" of wood kiln and "fabrication" of charcoal kiln.
- Nice, focused, reasonably budgeted effort with potential for growth and expansion.
- No issues. Great potential tech transfer model. Equipment purchase will require forms.

## 23. FY17 MD-017

### **Good Green: Forest Health Strategies for Maryland Landscapes**

- High price tag for outcomes. Not very innovative but good cooperation with partners. Follows up on previous efforts. Timeline unclear.
- Interesting approach with small, urban and large forests. Nice inclusion of a Forest Legacy Boy Scout camp. Moderate scale at 2,761 acres. No funded partners.
- Only \$45,500 out of the \$260,286 requested is actually for invasive species treatments on 125 acres.

**24. FY17 VT-028**

**Creating Climate Resilient Forest Landscapes for People, Songbirds, & Wildlife**

- Good use of Foresters for the Birds, a prior Landscape Scale Restoration project. No funds for labor requested by applicant (self-contracting?). Partner budget tables not provided to explain use of funds by partners. Twenty-five songbird assessments is very expensive at \$835 per landowner. Outcomes only seek to impact 25 landowners at cost of \$2,000 per landowner. Proposal not clear about "Woodlot Groups" or "RCPs." Twenty-five landowners is not landscape scale.
- Unclear if funding will be used for conservation easements; see deliverable.

**25. FY17 MI-013**

**Detroit Reforestation and Engagement**

- Redefines the concept of urban forestry and has the potential to put Detroit's vast and open (yet also urban...) landscape to work along social, economic, and environmental fronts.
- There is mention of urban wood utilization but not sure what the plan is.
- High capital cost of nursery development may not be replicable for tech transfer.

**26. FY17 IN-041**

**The Indiana Natural Resources Teacher Institute**

- This proposal represents a good value with a high potential for translating the initial grant investment into long-term forest ecology education.
- Good conservation education project. Excellent leverage from industry and broad support from the conservation community. The "Equipment" cost of \$7,500 for Forestry Kits belongs in "Supplies." Need to fix if selected for funding.
- Potential number of teachers and students reachable are not highly certain to be met.
- Equipment list should be supplies.

**27. FY17 NJ-010**

**Healthy Forests for New Jersey Birds**

- Has the potential to leverage large human populations to advance the efforts proposed.
- No issues.

**28. FY17 IL-003**

**Buckthorn Eradication Project: Landscape Scale Restoration Surrounding Middlefork Savanna**

- This proposal is relevant to several communities across the area, particularly related to buckthorn invasion. There are several well-qualified regional partners listed on this submission.
- Good forest health invasive species treatment/restoration proposal – though expensive. The Northeastern Area has a separate Request for Proposals (RFP) for these. This proposal is less applicable as a Landscape Scale Restoration project, even though more funds are available in this RFP than the forest health treatment proposal.
- Mitigation and control are probably better terminology to use here instead of “eradication.” Project deals with important issue in a cost-effective way. Concerns with ½ of the project target area belonging to a Country Club. Where is their contribution? What do we make of the State Forester's comment, “No project deliverables are expected to accrue during the grant period”?
- No 3400-2 form with target acres. Maintenance not addressed.

**29. FY17 VT-030**

**Providing Outreach and Technical Assistance when Forestland Owners Need It**

- This proposal would seem to simply augment the State's existing program related to encouraging management of private forest resources. While the level of participation can always be increased, there seems to be the potential for significant overlap in relation to other existing forest management resources.
- This project works with existing landowners who already have management plans, which it appears they have to follow. According to the project overview, “Each enrolled parcel has a stewardship or other forest management plan that is updated every ten years and includes a timeline of management activities. Landowners must adhere to these plans to maintain eligibility in UVA.” If they have to follow the plans to participate in the program, I do not see why they need additional contracting to do management.
- Re: tech transfer, a manual will be produced, but it is not listed as a measurable.
- No issues.

### **30. FY17 MN-025**

#### **Integrated EAB Management to Improve the Upper Mississippi River Basin**

- EAB is a priority, but the proposal would be more effective if the cities were identified. \$215,000 for three unidentified communities. Partner budget tables are not correct. Matching funds are not explained. No new tech transfer products. Large outcomes are not possible to verify if cities are not identified.
- Good project. Agree this is the best approach for EAB management. The practices in this proposal are already well tested and broadly communicated. Concern with open-ended reference to tree removal. Expensive work and limits reach of grant funds. I think Minnesota should target this work on priority communities, i.e., use their proposed RFP to communities in a targeted way.
- Forest Health has a current, ongoing project with the Minnesota Dept. of Agriculture not referenced in this proposal; no apparent coordination. As it now exists, funding this proposal will support a competing and possibly duplicative project rather than a "landscape" level approach across the State.

### **31. FY17 MO-040**

#### **Blue River Action Plan: Revitalizing Communities with Forest Corridors**

- Small target area; the proposal did not really stand out to me.
- Trash removal and management not in authorities.

### **32. FY17 IA-009**

#### **Improving Benefits of the Urban Landscape through Increased Tree Canopy**

- Outcomes to deliverables looks good but not well presented. Trees Forever expertise and uses utilities well. Is marketing plan replicable?
- Would like to see more about the planting effort.
- Connection between goals and strategic plan unclear. Marketing plan is unclear. Is this multistate? (see State Forester letter).
- No issues.

### **33. FY17 NY-034**

#### **New York State Kudzu Eradication, Survey and Outreach**

- Eradicating an invasive species would be great. Budget does not explain the Federal investment. Forty-six of 67 sites were already treated in 2015 and more were treated in 2016 – so how many sites are yet to be treated with new Federal dollars in 17-19? No funded partners or new tech transfer products. No estimation of acreage to determine landscape scale.
- One-time treatment only with no followup to monitor and address reinvasion.

**34. FY17 MD-018**

**Restoring Forests in the Greater Baltimore Wilderness**

- I thought the accomplishments rather meager compared to the requested funding.
- Small project area, but seems doable.
- Partner funding does not appear to be guaranteed – see letter from Don Outen. No mention of Conservation Reserve Program/Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program on buffers. What does permanent protection mean here? Cost/benefit not compelling.
- This sounds like cost-sharing with landowner and supporting conservation easements, neither of which is authorized under this RFP. Additional clarification should be requested.

**35. FY17 MI-011**

**Hazard Fuels Mitigation and Invasive Species Control**

- Straightforward project and seems worthwhile. Didn't fill out outcomes so it's hard to judge, but seems effective for the money requested. Not sure on collaboration and leverage.
- Is this better suited as a Wildfire Risk Reduction (WRR) proposal? Vague tech transfer information.
- A worthy project, but this is more of a single focus WRR-type proposal, not LSR per se. It should be proposed in NA's next WRR RFP.
- Public and media outreach prior to burns will be important. Needs form 3400-2 detailing species and acres.

**36. FY17 NY-035**

**Community-Based and Regional Approach to Improving Urban Forest Health and Growth**

- Did not see much connection made between this project and the State's Forest Action Plan. The Forest Action Plan was not mentioned at all in the Desired Future Condition section. Accomplishments listed in the Measurable Results section were rather light for \$156,000. Liked the number of partners with financial input into the project, the leverage, and the tech transfer components. Also not sure I liked the money being utilized for a 1-year position.
- Proposal seems staff heavy and expected results seem vague.
- Lacks performance metrics; no followup in treated areas to deal with invasive species resprouting from seed banks to address reinvasion. No information on control measures.

**37. FY17 MN-023**

**Invasive Woody Species and Spruce Budworm Control: Preserving the Boreal Forest Ecosystem**

- Integrated activities — planting, treatment, and salvage. Not clear about what lands are being targeted. Outcomes relatively small, although it's claiming more impact than reasonable. Good partnerships, however.
- Unclear if project will work on the Superior National Forest and Boundary Waters Canoe Area — both Federal lands. Cannot use Forest Health authorities to remove defoliated trees.

**38. FY17 CT-039**

**Responding to EAB with Urban Youth: A Community Endeavor**

- I have serious concerns about a multiyear LSR grant that utilizes funds to pay for watering. I also have concerns about youth volunteers handling imidacloprid.
- Solid proposal. Good priority landscape targeting and conservation education component in an urban environment.
- Overmatched.
- Retreatment is necessary in the third year to be successful. Licensing fees for 60 applicants is not needed to complete project. Not multiproject.

**39. FY17 CT-037**

**Goodwin State Forest Area Invasive Plant Eradication and Education Project**

- Reasonable costs at \$49/acre and medium-size location of 1,843 acres. Match is not defined and no funded partners. Minimal leverage or intentional knowledge transfer.
- I would have liked to have seen more measurable outcomes. For example, education, private lands outreach, training volunteers. All these things are alluded to in the grant but since they are not listed under measurable outcomes, I cannot assume that you actually intend to account for these things. I did not see any partner match or financial stake in the project.
- Long-term activities and numerous invasive species. Eradication uncertain as currently presented.
- No issues; why multi?

**40. FY17 IN-042**

**I-CUUT, Indiana Communities Utilizing Urban Trees**

- Great idea as a pilot, but the application is not clear on whether this will provide outcomes they are hoping for. Only three workshops seems like a missed opportunity.
- Conceptually this is a good proposal but may be too ambitious in scope. There is no sawmill repair downtime factored into this proposal.
- The intent is very good. There has been a lot of work done to promote urban wood utilization. Projects like this one have been tried in other States (RC&Ds, small sawmill operators, cities, etc.). It is not sustainable without a wood utilization company and market(s). Otherwise it's dependent on government funding. No apparent industry involvement in this proposal except from the portable saw company selling the equipment. Liability aspect not mentioned. Would need a better acronym.
- Urban utilization.
- Comment from Ed Cesa concerned about liability and equipment tracking over long term; acronym looks like a curse word.

**41. FY17 NY-036**

**NIPF Engagement in the Little Finger Lakes Corridor**

- Good mix of partners and 180 landowners at \$296 per landowner is a reasonable cost. Mailing 600 letters will not engage 180 respondents (30% response unlikely). Many partners but none are funded. One hundred-eighty landowners is not landscape scale.
- Many partners were named but there was little indication of what their role in committing actual financial or in-kind resources to the project would be. I would have liked to have seen some indication of how many of the proposed number of acres would receive actual on-the-ground management.
- Seems like the proposal is only reaching a small audience with landowner engagement through workshops, direct mailings, and a conservation handbook.
- Equipment should be in supplies.
- No issues; why is this multi?

**42. FY17 NH-016**

**Local's Guide to On-Site Assessment and Management of Defoliated Hardwood Forests**

- Promises to be a very useful guide for New England forest owners/managers. Once produced, the materials would be relevant for several years to come, suggesting this might be a sound investment.
- Seems like a lot of money for Best Management Practices manuals and training foresters for things they should already know. Many of the partners mentioned in the collaboration, leverage, and tech transfer sections appear to have no financial stake in the project. I liked the 80 landowner assessments, but would have liked to have seen a commitment to forest stewardship plans for some portion of those landowners.

A guide is to be developed, but the audience and "user groups" for it aren't clear. It appears to be targeted to practitioners and landowners at a minimum. The marketing and distribution are vague.