



USDA Forest Service, Eastern Region, State and Private Forestry Fiscal Year 2020 Financial Advice to States

This document provides program-specific purposes, objectives, intended use of funds, reporting requirements, and grant administration information for the 20 States and the District of Columbia served by the Forest Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Eastern Region, State and Private Forestry (S&PF). The grant narrative formats are on our [Grants Narrative Formats web page](#). Accomplishment reporting outlined here addresses activities, actions, and outcomes to be completed in the current Fiscal Year (FY). This reporting guidance is included to ensure that partners are aware of what, when, and how to report results. Allocations to the States reflect the funding that S&PF has available for FY 2020. The State Allocation Sheets are updated on our [Financial Advice to States website](#). In addition, this page will display any changes related to pass-through funds, initiated by State Foresters, or their equivalent.

Please refer to our [Grants web page](#) for purpose and reporting requirements for S&PF competitive grant processes, including Landscape Scale Restoration, Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, Wood Innovation, and the Wildfire Risk Reduction and Wildfire Response programs.

Key Changes in FY 2020:

- The email address for official grants correspondence is now SM.FS.R9SPFgrants@usda.gov.
- Invoices will not be approved in our financial system for any recipients that have missing grant reports until the program receives, approves, and the missing performance or financial reports are loaded into our financial system.
- The email address to submit all invoices to the ASC inbox is now SM.FS.asc_ga@usda.gov.
- The Forest Stewardship Program is in transition to the new, modernized requirements. Pay careful attention to the reporting and Priority Areas requirements for this program (pages 12-19).

Table of Contents

CTRL + Click below to Navigate to a Section

USDA Forest Service Eastern Region S&PF Contacts	2
Due Dates at a Glance	3
Program Specific Information	4
Cooperative Forest Health Protection (CFHP) Program	4
Forest Health Monitoring (FHM) Program.....	5
Pest Prevention and Suppression Projects	5
Gypsy Moth Slow-the-Spread (STS) Program	6
Cooperative Fire Program (CFP).....	7
State Fire Assistance (SFA) Program	7
Volunteer Fire Assistance (VFA) Program	9
Forest Stewardship Program (FSP)	12
Watershed Forestry: Chesapeake Bay and New York City Watersheds	20
Urban and Community Forestry (UCF) Program.....	21
Forest Legacy Program (FLP).....	25
Community Forest and Open Space Conservation Program (CFP)	26
Conservation Education (CE) Program.....	27
Grant Management and Process Information	28



USDA Forest Service Eastern Region S&PF Contacts

Direct questions to your respective Field Office Representative, program, or grant staff listed below.

Note: The email address for official grants correspondence: SM.FS.R9SPFgrants@usda.gov.

New England States and New York: CT, MA, ME, NH, NY, RI, VT

- **Durham, NH Field Office Representative:** Mike Bohne, acting until June 20, 802-238-7516, michael.bohne@usda.gov; then Constance Carpenter, 603-868-7694, constance.carpenter@usda.gov
- Forest Health: Kevin Dodds, acting until June 20, 603-868-7743, kevin.j.dodds@usda.gov; then Mike Bohne, 802-238-7516, michael.bohne@usda.gov
- Forest Stewardship Program: Peter Beringer, 603-868-7699, peter.beringer@usda.gov
- Urban and Community Forestry Program: John Parry, 603-868-7688, john.parry@usda.gov
- New York City Watershed: Karl Honkonen, 603-868-7616, karl.w.honkonen@usda.gov

Mid-Atlantic States and Washington, DC: DC, DE, MD, NJ, OH, PA, WV

- **Morgantown, WV Field Office Representative:** Joe Koloski, 304-285-1540, joseph.koloski@usda.gov
- Forest Health: Rick Turcotte, 304-285-1544, richard.m.turcotte@usda.gov
- Forest Stewardship Program: Amy Hill, 304-285-1565, amy.hill@usda.gov
- Urban and Community Forestry Program: Julie Mawhorter, 570-296-9626, julie.mawhorter@usda.gov
- Chesapeake Bay Watershed: Sally Claggett, 410-267-5706, sally.claggett@usda.gov

Midwestern States: IA, IL, IN, MI, MN, MO, WI

- **St. Paul, MN Field Office Representative:** Carleen Yocum, 651-649-5276, carleen.yocum@usda.gov
- Forest Health: Sunny Lucas, 651-649-5180, sunny.l.lucas@usda.gov
- Forest Stewardship Program: Dennis McDougall, 651-649-5182, dennis.mcdougall@usda.gov
- Urban and Community Forestry Program: Jill Johnson, 651-649-5253, jill.johnson@usda.gov

Grants Management Specialists and other Regional Contacts

- **S&PF Lead Grants Management Specialist:** Midori Raymore, 414-297-1894, midori.raymore@usda.gov
 - John LaBounty, 414-297-3645, john.labounty@usda.gov
 - Sandra Krzewinski, 414-297-3169, sandra.krzewinski@usda.gov
 - Andrew Meindl, 414-297-1262, andrew.meindl@usda.gov
 - Emily Sumner, 414-297-4474, emily.sumner@usda.gov
 - Support Grants Management Specialist: Darius Parks, 414-297-3624, darius.parks@usda.gov
 - Support Grants Management Specialist: Brian Webber, brian.webber@usda.gov
- **Conservation Education** (20 States and DC): Susan Cox, 603-868-7706, susan.m.cox@usda.gov and Lisa Myers, 414-944-3590, lisa.j.myers@usda.gov
- **Forest Legacy Program** (20 States): Kirston Buczak, 414-297-3609, kirston.buczak@usda.gov
- **Community Forest and Open Space Conservation Program** (20 States and DC): Neal Bungard, 603-868-7719, neal.bungard@usda.gov
- **State Fire Assistance**
 - Northeast Compact, Great Lakes Compact, and the States of IA, IL, IN, MI, MN, MO, OH, PA, WV: Dennis Fiore, 414-944-3932, dennis.fiore@usda.gov
 - Big Rivers Compact, Mid-Atlantic Compact, and the States of CT, DE, MA, MD, ME, NH, NJ, NY, RI, VT: Bob Fitzhenry, 603-953-3294, robert.fitzhenry@usda.gov
- **Volunteer Fire Assistance** (20 States): Todd Walerak, 414-297-1128, todd.t.walerak@usda.gov

Due Dates at a Glance

The following is a summary of the performance reporting due dates for this FY.

September 30, 2020: Cooperative Fire: Federal Excess Property Management Information System (FPMIS) receipt and documentation of all Federal Excess Personal Property (FEPP) and Firefighter Property (FFP) items acquired during FY 2020

October 6, 2020: Forest Stewardship Program

- Forest Stewardship accomplishments in Stewardship Mapping And Reporting Tool (SMART) and SMART Accomplishment Reports (SMARTar)
- S&PF Optional Reporting Metrics

October 15, 2020: Forest Legacy and Community Forest and Open Space Conservation Programs

Urban and Community Forestry Program

Conservation Education accomplishments across all programs

Cooperative Lands Forest Health Management

Cooperative Forest Health Protection (CFHP) Program

- Early Detection Rapid Response (EDRR) data

Pest Prevention and Suppression Projects

- Final Gypsy moth treatment acreage, gypsy moth defoliation, and gypsy moth project summaries for input in the Gypsy Moth Digest Database
- Post-project treatment evaluation reports

Forest Health Monitoring (FHM) Program

- Digital insect and disease survey data

November 13, 2020: Cooperative Lands Forest Health Management

Cooperative Forest Health Protection (CFHP) Program

- Forest Health Pest Conditions Narratives (Pest Event data)
- Walnut Twig Beetle/Thousand Cankers Disease (WTB/TCD) trapping data
- Sudden Oak Death (SOD) data
- Beech Leaf Disease (BLD) data
- Hemlock Woolly Adelgid (HWA) data

Forest Health Monitoring (FHM) Program

- Forest Health Pest Conditions Narratives (Pest Event data)
- Forest Health Highlights (Note: Reports may be either submitted or published online by this date.)

January 31, 2021: State Fire Program: Upload FY 2020 State Fire Occurrence data to FAMWEB

No Later than March 31, 2021: Annual Program and Financial Progress Reports For All Open Grants

Note: The Forest Service has established standard reporting timeframes for interim financial and accomplishment reporting for all open grants and agreements. See the [Grant Management and Process Information, "Reporting Timeframes" section of this document](#) for the due dates for these reports.

Program Specific Information

Cooperative Forest Health Protection (CFHP) Program

Allocation

The Cooperative Forest Health Protection (CFHP) Program allocation defined in the Forest Service directives ([FSM 3400](#), [Chapter 3430](#)) is a minimum of \$60,000. With the matching State contribution, this provides for at least a \$120,000 CFHP Program in each State unless otherwise agreed upon. Through prior discussions between the Forest Health Protection (FHP) Director in Washington, DC, and the National Association of State Foresters, it was agreed that this amount was sufficient to support one forest entomologist or forest pathologist position in CFHP-participating States. Having a full-time forest entomologist or plant pathologist on staff is a **national requirement** to be eligible for the CFHP Program funding.

State forest health partners who do not have at least one permanent entomologist or plant pathologist on staff are **required to annually request a waiver** from this requirement and **submit a detailed plan for approval** demonstrating how the CFHP Program will be implemented and monitored in their State. That waiver request and plan should be negotiated, reviewed, and approved by the FHP Field Office staff serving your State. Include the approved waiver and plan in your forest health core funding grant application.

To ensure a successful cooperative program, State partners participating in the CFHP program need to:

1. Participate in the annual FHP State cooperators meeting held by their S&PF Field Office;
2. Participate in the annual meeting of the Northeast-Midwest State Foresters Alliance (NMSFA), Forest Health Committee;
3. Participate in other planning meetings and conference calls as necessary.

States participating in Walnut Twig Beetle/Thousand Cankers Disease (WTB/TCD) detection surveys will find their project datasheets and instructions for accessing the 2020 monitoring guidelines at this Thousand Cankers Disease Survey Maps [website](#).

States participating in nationally coordinated activities like Early Detection Rapid Response (EDRR), WTB/TCD surveys, and Sudden Oak Death (SOD) surveys are required to participate in all related planning meetings and conference calls.

Accomplishments

The specific program targets and deliverables are to be negotiated with the [S&PF Field Office FHP staff serving your State](#). Reporting dates are as follows:

Due October 15, 2020:

- EDRR trapping data

Due November 13, 2020:

- Forest Health Pest Conditions narratives and related data for the pest event database, including reports of pests on the national list.
- WTB/TCD trapping data
- SOD survey data
- BLD data
- HWA data

For further information, contact the [S&PF Field Office FHP staff serving your State](#).

Forest Health Monitoring (FHM) Program

Allocation

The National Forest Health Monitoring (FHM) Program promotes the collection of forest stress and disturbance data on Federal, State, tribal, and private lands using nationally standardized methods and data fields. Standardized data are necessary to produce reports and maps depicting regional and national forest health conditions in an unbiased and scientific manner. Allocation of FHM base funding is based on the number of participating States and acres of forested land in those States. FHM program partners are to use national standards to conduct aerial and ground surveys and report survey data on an annual basis. FHM funding should also be used to support participation in program activities, such as risk mapping of forest insects and pathogens.

The 20 States served by S&PF participate in activities identified as priorities through the FHM Program. The National FHM Program requires, at a minimum, that all aerial and ground-based survey data be collected and delivered to Field Offices by October 15, 2020, using [Digital Mobile Sketch Mapping \(DMSM\)](#) codes, standards, and format. States receiving FHM funds are required to prepare and submit Forest Health Highlights to Field Offices by mid-November. States are also expected to participate in the National FHM Workshop and other meetings and conference calls as requested by S&PF Regional FHM Coordinator Stephen Burr (414-297-1535, stephen.burr@usda.gov).

Accomplishment Reporting Requirements

The following program deliverables are to be reported to the [S&PF Field Office FHP staff serving your State](#):

Due October 15, 2020:

- Digital aerial and ground-based insect and disease survey data using DMSM standards

Due November 13, 2020:

- Forest Health Highlights
Note: Forest Health Highlights reports may be submitted to the S&PF Field Office FHP staff or published online by this date. If report is published online, a link to the report must be provided to the S&PF Field Office FHP staff by the specified due date.
- Forest Health Pest Conditions Narratives (pest event data)

Pest Prevention and Suppression Projects

Allocation

FY 2020 pest prevention and suppression projects must meet FHP Program standards (reference FSM 3400). Projects must demonstrate a **Federal role** and be **biologically effective** and **economically efficient**. All projects must be supported by a **biological evaluation** demonstrating the need for action. Depending on the kind of project, additional documentation may be required such as a project-level environmental analysis, project work, safety and security plans, coordination with other Federal agencies and/or tribes, and maps or digital data of treatment area locations and attributes. Oak wilt projects should follow the protocols and reporting requirements outlined in the [Participation Guidelines for Oak Wilt Cooperative Prevention and Suppression Projects](#).

All treatment projects require that a post-project review and evaluation be conducted and documented in a post-treatment evaluation report.

Fiscal Year 2020 Financial Advice to States

Accomplishment Reporting Requirement

Report the following program deliverables to the [S&PF Field Office FHP staff serving your State](#):

Due October 15, 2020:

- Post-project treatment evaluation report
- Final gypsy moth treatment acreage, gypsy moth defoliation data, and gypsy moth project summaries to the Gypsy Moth Digest Database

Gypsy Moth Slow-the-Spread (STS) Program

Allocation

Gypsy Moth Slow-the-Spread (STS) is a national initiative that is implemented through the STS Foundation, a nonprofit entity composed of gypsy moth program directors from States located along the leading edge of the gypsy moth generally infested area. The program has variable cost-share rate on a cooperator-by-cooperator basis with an overall target cost share of 75 percent (FS)/25 percent (other) for the entire program. The non-FS share has been negotiated with the STS Foundation and other cooperators, and is reflected in the State Allocation Sheets. The non-Federal share is a fixed commitment that does not change, even if the Federal share fluctuates. The annual budget and allocations are prepared by the STS Program Manager and approved by the STS Foundation Board of Directors.

Accomplishments

Targets, deliverables, and due dates are negotiated annually with the STS Foundation by the STS Program Manager. For further information, contact regional STS Coordinator John Kyhl at 651-649-5265 or john.f.kyhl@usda.gov, or the [S&PF Field Office FHP staff serving your State](#).

Outreach and Education for all Forest Health Programs:

Report forest health education accomplishments focused on outreach and education to K-12 students, educators, and families (if any) to the [NatureWatch, Interpretation and Conservation Education database \(NICE\)](#) by October 15, 2020. Examples of reportable accomplishments include invasive species detection and monitoring projects that engage youth and families, or helping teachers or students with understanding forest insects and disease. Consult the User's Manual on the NICE home page for instructions. You can create reports throughout the FY and can group like events in one report.

Cooperative Fire Program (CFP)

Funds for State Fire Assistance (SFA) and Volunteer Fire Assistance (VFA) are provided through the Cooperative Fire Program (CFP). These funds provide the opportunity for States to address their critical fire management needs and to develop capabilities as described within the National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy (CS). The goals include restoring and maintaining resilient landscapes, fire-adapted communities, and safe and effective wildfire response.

S&PF provides funding to Forest Fire Protection Compacts to help support and leverage progress toward CS goals by all partners.

The CFP requires that States meet certain accountability requirements, in **addition** to the reporting requirements of the grant process.

By accepting these funds, States acknowledge the reporting requirements required by the CFP and have adopted and use the National Incident Management System (NIMS) in day-to-day emergency operations. Direction provided by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) NIMS Integration Center confirms that this "NIMS compliant" requirement will only apply to preparedness funding.

Direction

The following provides specific direction for the CFP, including accomplishment reporting, program-specific grant narrative formats, and direction on appropriate use of SFA and VFA funds for FY 2020.

Grant Narratives for Fire Programs

Use of the generic grant narrative format is required for the SFA and VFA Programs and is available on the [S&PF Grant Narrative Formats web page](#).

SFA and VFA grant narrative guidelines require the completion of the National Fire Plan Operating Reporting System (NFORS) "Activities" form, available at the bottom of the [Grants Application Documents web page](#). Submit this form with the grant narrative.

Note: The grant narrative format provided along with the budget allocation serves as a guide. Each State will emphasize those actions as identified in the [Northeastern Area Strategic Plan](#); the [National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy Northeast Regional Action Plan](#); and their respective [State Forest Action Plan](#), State Fire Management Plan, and Fire Risk Assessment that address its unique needs.

State Fire Assistance (SFA) Program

Authority

The State Fire Assistance (SFA) Program is authorized by the [Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978](#)¹ to support State and local rural fire prevention and control programs, including those of Forest Fire Compacts, by providing financial support for prevention, control, suppression, and prescribed use of fires. Funding is also authorized to help conduct preparedness activities, including training, equipping, and otherwise enabling State and local firefighting agencies to respond to requests for fire suppression assistance. Funding provided through this program promotes mobilization readiness for efficient suppression of wildfires on all

¹ [Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978](#) [P.L. 95—313; Approved July 1, 1978] was amended by the Food, Conservation, and Energy Acts (Farm Bills) of 2008, 2014, and 2018 [P.L. 115—334, Enacted December 20, 2018].

Fiscal Year 2020 Financial Advice to States

State and private lands to help maintain resilient forests and promote working relationships and service excellence.

Allocation Direction

A base level of funding is distributed in order for all States to maintain and enhance coordination and communication with Federal agencies, as well as supply needed performance data. Remaining funds are allocated to each State based on acres of non-Federal forested land, wildland-urban interface population outside of urban areas, and wildfire risk.

Match Requirements

Unless otherwise exempted by law, regulation, or policy, all grant applicants must provide a 1:1 cost-share match. This match must be available at the time of application. Applicants may not derive their share from other sources of Federal assistance. The applicant's share of the financial assistance can be in the form of cash or "in-kind" contributions. Examples of in-kind contributions include the use of volunteer labor to remove hazardous fuels and to deliver training.

Purpose

The purpose of the SFA Program is to provide financial, technical, and related assistance to State Foresters or equivalent State officials and through them to other agencies and individuals. Funds should provide financial assistance, technical training, and equipment to ensure that Federal, State, and local fire agencies can deliver a coordinated response to wildfire. Funding provided through SFA should be focused to address critical State-affiliated preparedness needs, community mitigation, and hazardous fuels. Critical preparedness needs include firefighter safety, fire planning, firefighter training, increased and enhanced initial attack capability, and mobilization capacity and readiness for the efficient suppression and prevention of wildfires on non-Federal forest lands and other non-Federal lands. Community mitigation and hazardous fuels activities should focus on creating fire-adapted communities by reducing hazardous fuels, developing Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPPs), providing prevention and mitigation education, and achieving Firewise programming and community hazard mitigation. SFA funding promotes the maintenance of resilient forests, sustainable economic development, both traditional and non-traditional partnerships, and service excellence.

Emphasis should be placed on funding areas that have developed or are developing CWPPs, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) hazard mitigation plans, or other collaboratively developed hazard mitigation plans. Funding may be used to support the establishing or growing of a market for woody biomass material that assists with fuels hazard mitigation. An additional use of funds would be conducting education/outreach to communities to help them better understand the opportunity wood energy might have for them as an alternative source of energy and create markets for hazardous fuels in order to help create more fire-adapted communities. These options are not required of States but are allowed.

Authorized Activities

Program activities for SFA funds include:

- ✓ Administration
- ✓ Preparedness
- ✓ Suppression / support
- ✓ Equipment
- ✓ Training

Community Mitigation and Hazardous Fuels:

- ✓ Plans / assessments
- ✓ Prevention / education
- ✓ Hazardous fuels acres treated
- ✓ Communities assisted

Fiscal Year 2020 Financial Advice to States

Equipment Purchase Guidelines

Prior approval is required for equipment purchases with a unit cost of \$5,000 and over. All proposed equipment purchases must be outlined in the grant application and a Grant Justification and Certification Statement (FS-1500-34) must be provided. Detailed guidance for equipment purchases is available on the S&PF Grants and Agreements [Grants Application Documents web page](#) under the Equipment subheading.

Allowable Costs

Examples of acceptable uses of SFA Program funds (SPCF) include, but may not be limited to, the following:

- Additional State fire management specialists
- Promoting firefighter safety
- Enhancing initial attack capabilities
- Development and strengthening of multistate fire compacts
- Improving State readiness capability to match Federal readiness capability
- Increasing fire planning in high-risk areas
- Assisting communities with the development of CWPPs
- Emphasizing and expanding the Firewise Communities Program
- Adoption of the National Incident Management System (NIMS)
- Promoting the concept of Fire Adapted Communities in the wildland-urban interface
- Implementation of Firewise treatments in communities
- Emphasizing training in the Incident Command System's (ICS) firefighting structure to complement fire protection on Federal lands
- Hazard mitigation activities through fuels reduction and community defensibility
- Equipping and training wildland firefighters to provide effective initial attack and support for mobilization of resources for wildland fire on lands of all ownerships
- Support the establishing of a woody biomass market that assists with fuels hazard mitigation
- Conducting education/outreach to communities to assist in creating markets for hazardous fuels in order to help create fire-adapted communities

Accountability will be measured by improved capacity to respond to wildfires, personnel/ firefighters trained, acres treated, CWPPs developed and implemented, prevention/Firewise activities completed, hazard mitigation projects completed, and communities assisted.

State partners are encouraged to support CWPP efforts by coordinating with Forest Stewardship, Urban and Community Forestry, and Forest Health Programs in directing assistance to landowners and communities in high fire risk and wildland-urban interface areas where CWPPs are being implemented.

NFPORS Reporting Required

Planned and Final Accomplishments must be reported on the SFA NFPORS form at the bottom of the [Grants Application Documents web page](#) and submitted with the grant narrative and final report to the relevant [S&PF SFA Program Specialist](#).

Volunteer Fire Assistance (VFA) Program

Authority

The Volunteer Fire Assistance (VFA) Program is authorized by the [Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978](#)¹ to provide financial, technical, and other assistance through State forestry agencies to organize, equip, and train small, local fire departments in rural communities with populations under 10,000 to prevent and suppress rural fires. Work contributes to resilient forests, forest stewardship, and sustainable economic development. VFA dollars may be used to fund multi-community/fire department projects such as mutual-aid communications networks.

Fiscal Year 2020 Financial Advice to States

Allocation Direction

Allocations are based on acres of wildland-urban interface to be protected from the risk of catastrophic fires and the number of fire departments serving communities with populations under 10,000. No more than 10% of the Federal funds granted may be used for the administration of the grant.

Funds will be focused to address critical preparedness needs for firefighter safety, increased initial attack capability, and training. An emphasis will be placed on funding areas that have developed and are developing CWPPs, FEMA hazard mitigation plans, or other collaboratively developed hazard mitigation plans.

Funds provide financial assistance, technical training, and equipment to ensure that Federal, State, and local fire agencies can deliver a coordinated response to wildfire. The emphasis is on improving fire planning, initial attack capabilities, adopting the NIMS, creating Fire Adapted Communities in the wildland-urban interface, and providing wildland fire techniques training for local fire agencies.

Match Requirements

Unless otherwise exempted by law, regulation, or policy, all grant applicants must provide a 1:1 cost-share match. This match must be available at the time of application. Applicants may not derive their share from other sources of Federal assistance. The applicant's share of the financial assistance can be in the form of cash or "in-kind" contributions. Examples of in-kind contributions include the use of volunteer labor to remove hazardous fuels and to deliver training.

Equipment Purchase Guidelines

Prior approval is required for equipment purchases with a unit cost of \$5,000 and over. All proposed equipment purchases must be outlined in the grant application and a Grant Justification and Certification Statement (FS-1500-34) must be provided. Detailed guidance for equipment purchases is available on the S&PF [Grants Application Documents web page](#) under the Equipment subheading.

Allowable Costs

The VFA funds (SPVF) may be used to provide for the following:

- Wildland fire management training
- Community fire prevention and community planning
- Protective fire clothing
- Modern communications equipment for more effective action on incidents
- Firefighting equipment such as nozzles, hose, gloves, goggles, and other smaller scale equipment
- Purchase and installation of water delivery systems, cisterns, dry hydrants, etc.
- Acquisition, development, and modification of Federal Excess Property or DOD Firefighter Equipment to fire apparatus for fire departments
- Organizing new fire departments

NFPORS Reporting Required

Planned and Final Accomplishments must be reported on the VFA NFPORS form, which is available at the bottom of the [Grants Application Documents web page](#) and then submitted with the grant narrative and final report to the relevant [S&PF SFA Program Specialist](#).

Accomplishment Reporting Requirements

1. State Fire Occurrence data: For FY 2020, States are required to upload their data directly into the [Fire and Aviation Management Web \(FAMWEB\) Data Warehouse](#) by **January 31, 2021**.
2. Daily reporting of wildfire activity to the Eastern Area Coordination Center (EACC), including reporting through [ICS Form 209](#) for all fires in excess of 100 acres and any fire of significance.

Fiscal Year 2020 Financial Advice to States

3. All Federal Excess Personal Property (FEPP) and Firefighter Property Program (FFP) items acquired during FY 2020 must be receipted and entered into the Federal Excess Property Management Information System (FEPMIS) located in FAMWEB by **September 30, 2020**.
4. Upon request, grant recipients will provide quarterly monitoring updates within 30 days of said request for information.
5. Interim (annual) Performance Progress Reports for all SFA and VFA grants must be provided to S&PF by **March 31, 2020**. Final reports are due 30 days after the grant expiration date.
6. NFPORS Planned Accomplishment Summary Reports for SFA and VFA grants should be submitted to the respective Program Managers for entry of data into the NFPORS Database.

Outreach and Education for all Fire Programs:

Report Fire Education accomplishments focused on outreach and education to K-12 students, educators, and families (if any) to the [NatureWatch, Interpretation and Conservation Education database \(NICE\)](#) by October 15, 2020. Examples of reportable accomplishments include Smokey 75th celebrations at festivals, fairs, and schools, and work with educators/students to understand fire-dependent ecosystems. Consult the User's Manual on the NICE home page for instructions. You can create reports throughout the FY and can group like events in one report.

Forest Stewardship Program (FSP)

Allocation

Forest Stewardship Program allocation in Region 9 includes a base funding payment of \$54,620 and additional funds tied to performance and potential (owners and acres). If you have any questions on this topic, please contact S&PF Director of Cooperative Forestry [Mark Buccowich \(mark.buccowich@usda.gov\)](mailto:mark.buccowich@usda.gov).

Program Direction

State partners are encouraged to further focus program assistance and outreach efforts and/or initiate landscape-scale approaches to program delivery in Important Forest Resource Areas that have been defined by State Forest Action Plans.

While focusing program delivery in Important Forest Resource Areas, States are encouraged to identify opportunities to deliver multi-landowner, landscape-scale planning assistance in priority landscapes. States should promote local peer-to-peer landowner networks where appropriate to extend technical assistance efforts and increase potential for multi-landowner planning efforts and landowner aggregations that might provide access to emerging forest product and service markets.

State partners are encouraged to support Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) efforts by directing assistance to landowners and communities in high fire risk and wildland-urban interface areas where CWPPs are being implemented. States are also encouraged to identify areas where Forest Stewardship, Forest Health, and Urban and Community Forestry assistance efforts can together address loss of open space and inform local planning to support green infrastructure retention and creation.

All States are encouraged to consider and utilize, where appropriate, the [Landscape Scale Stewardship Guidance](#) developed by the Forest Stewardship Project through the cooperative engagement of S&PF and the Northeast-Midwest State Foresters Alliance (NMSFA).

States are encouraged to increase landowner access to assistance, particularly opportunities to participate in biomass energy, certification, USDA cost-share programs, and markets.

States need to participate in the annual NMSFA Cooperative Forest Management Committee Meeting.

Accomplishment Reporting Requirements

States and Territories are strongly encouraged to use the Stewardship Mapping and Reporting Tool (SMART) and the Stewardship Accomplishments Data Loader (SADL) to enter accomplishment data throughout FY 2020. The USDA Forest Service Eastern Region Coordinator is responsible for reviewing State data for accuracy in representing FY 2020 Forest Stewardship Program accomplishments by **October 6, 2020**. States are responsible for ensuring that all required FY 2020 reporting data is complete, correct, and entered into SMART and SMARTar by dates established by the Regions or IITF.

Program Performance Measures

- Number of landowners assisted
- Number of landowners educated
- Acres covered by new and/or revised Forest Stewardship Plans
- Number of new and/or revised Forest Stewardship Plans
- Acres covered by current Forest Stewardship Plans
- Acres in Forest Stewardship Program Priority Areas covered by current Forest Stewardship Plans
- Acres in Forest Stewardship Program Priority Areas being managed sustainably, as confirmed by established plan monitoring guidelines
- Acres covered by Practice Plans or other Forest Management Plans

Fiscal Year 2020 Financial Advice to States

- Acres in Forest Stewardship Program Priority Areas covered by Practice Plans or other Forest Management Plans
- Acres covered by Landscape Stewardship Plans
- Acres in Forest Stewardship Priority Program Areas covered by Landscape Stewardship Plans
- Number of seedlings produced and/or distributed
- Pounds of improved seed collected and/or produced

Additional Instructions

Landowner Assistance: Includes landowners who are known by program staff to have benefited in some significant and lasting way from Forest Stewardship or Rural Forestry Program Assistance.

This includes landowners who:

- Receive individualized and repeated technical assistance and for whom a case file is established and maintained.
- Have received assistance in the way of practice plans and management plans other than Forest Stewardship Plans.

This does not include landowners who:

- Simply attended a technical or training session without any follow-up.
- Were spoken to only once with no follow-up contact or later assistance.

Landowner Education: Includes landowners who have participated in a Forest Stewardship Program or Rural Forestry Assistance-sponsored educational workshop, course, or program designed to further enable them to sustainably manage their properties. Examples include landowner field days, timber tax seminars, estate planning workshops, silviculture courses, wildlife management seminars, forest management webinars, and management plan writing workshops. Do not include landowners who have attended only program marketing or orientation seminars that provide programmatic and application information. Videos, newsletters, brochures, publications, or public educational broadcasts or media are not considered "Landowner Education."

Forest Stewardship Plans: Includes multi-resource management plans that meet the minimum standards and content requirements detailed in the Forest Stewardship Program National Standards and Guidelines and have been approved by the State Forester or a suitable representative. When a plan expires, it should be revised to meet current standards of the most recent Forest Stewardship Program National Standards and Guidelines. Plans:

- Approved before October 1, 2005, that conformed to the first edition (1994) must be updated to current standards.
- Written after October 01, 2005, that conformed to the second edition (October 2005) must be updated to current standards.
- Written after March 01, 2009, must conform to the third edition (February 2009).
- Written after October 30, 2015, must conform to the fourth edition (October 2015).

Current Forest Stewardship Plans: A Forest Stewardship Plan is current if it is within the effective period stated in the plan. If no effective period is stated or known, a Forest Stewardship Plan is considered to be current if it has been written, revised, or updated in the previous 10 years. A Forest Stewardship Plan that explicitly covers a period of more than 10 years, as required by a state-administered program, is considered current as long as there is sufficient documentation and monitoring to indicate that it meets all State and Federal program requirements during the entire plan period. To provide consistency in national reporting and related funding methodology, States are encouraged to use 10 years as a standard effective period for Forest Stewardship Plans. Exceptions based on specific needs and conditions should be stated in the plan.

Fiscal Year 2020 Financial Advice to States

Forest Stewardship Program Priority Areas: These are landscape areas considered to be of high program potential or priority by State Forest Action Plans and are defined by National Forest Stewardship Program Standards and Guidelines.

Established Plan Monitoring Guidelines: The intent of the Forest Stewardship Program effort to monitor plan implementation is to reliably assess the extent to which current Forest Stewardship Management Plans are being implemented. National guidance was developed to get meaningful, statistically reliable results, while not placing an unreasonable burden on State partners. A statistically-randomized sample of all current Forest Stewardship Management Plans is selected in SMART and can include other programs run by States and Territories, such as tax programs, which require plan implementation and include periodic site inspections. When a sampled property is inspected through such a program, the results from the site inspection can be used to fulfill Forest Stewardship Management Plan monitoring requirements without another visit to the site.

Practice Plans and Other Forest Management Plans: These have some but not all elements included in approved Forest Stewardship Plans. These plans are also not typically approved by the State Forester or a suitable representative.

Landscape Stewardship Plans: Landscape Stewardship Plans are multi-landowner Forest Stewardship Plans developed to address landscape-level issues across all ownerships. Landowners within a Landscape Stewardship Plan area may choose to develop their own individual Forest Stewardship Plans or to simply manage those lands under the broader guidance of the Landscape Stewardship Plan. Landscape Stewardship Plans may include actions for connecting with landowners in other ways, e.g., workshops and field days.

Number of Seedlings Produced and/or Distributed: State-operated nurseries producing plant material for reforestation, conservation, or restoration plantings should report numbers for seedling production shipped during the reporting period and seedlings procured from other sources and distributed through that nursery. Do not include seedlings being produced at the nursery or procured from other sources for shipment outside of the reporting period. States without nurseries who are procuring seedlings from outside sources and distributing them to landowners for reforestation, conservation, or restoration plantings can also report numbers of seedlings distributed during the reporting period.

Pounds of Improved Seed Collected: States that conduct tree improvement programs and/or operate seed orchards that produce genetically improved seed should report the pounds of improved seed collected during the reporting period. Do not report uncollected seed produced in seed orchards.

SMART, SADL, and SMARTar: States are required to have all current Forest Stewardship Plans in SMART. States are encouraged to enter practice plans or other forest management plans to the most practical extent into SMART. States that do not use SMART for developing their Forest Stewardship and other management plans can load active plan data fields in the required format via the Stewardship Accomplishments Data Loader (SADL).

Plans that are entered into SMART using the SADL must include the following:

- Plan Shape (polygon)
- Plan Name
- Plan ID
- Plan Type (New or Revised)
- Plan Start Date
- Plan Duration
- Primary Funding Source

Optional fields include:

- Plan Category
- Surveyed Acres
- Primary Goals

SMART Accomplishment Reports (SMARTar) are accessed through the National Information Center (NIC) Portal and summarize accomplishment data from SMART. SMARTar allows States to check their

Fiscal Year 2020 Financial Advice to States

accomplishment data and adjust for plans that have not yet been entered into SMART. Regions/IITF are responsible for reviewing data entered by States to determine they accurately represent accomplishments for the Forest Stewardship Program by **October 6, 2020**. States are responsible for ensuring that all required reporting data for FY 2020 is complete, correct, and entered into SMART and SMARTar by the date established by the relevant Region or IITF, which is **October 6, 2020**, for the Eastern Region.

SMART and Plan Monitoring: Plan implementation monitoring methodology is incorporated into SMART. SMART National Administrators will initiate the plan monitoring process early in the calendar year. A list of “flagged” plans can then be downloaded by a SMART State Administrator and the plans will appear on the home page of the Plan Preparer. The plans simply need to be marked as “Implemented” or “Not Implemented.” States can keep track of their progress in real time by periodically downloading flagged reports. Plan monitoring information is also reflected in SMARTar.

Forest Stewardship Program Priority Areas (Priority Areas) Data: Forest Stewardship Priority Areas are defined as landscapes considered to be of high program potential or priority by State Forest Action Plans (see the National Forest Stewardship Program Standards and Guidelines). The submission window for updating Forest Stewardship Priority Areas is open annually during the month of March. If States determine that updates are needed for FY 2020 reporting, they must notify the USDA Forest Service, Forest Stewardship Program from April to June, which coincides with State Forest Action Plan deadlines (**Note:** For FY 2021 we plan to return to the usual **March 31** deadline). This data will then be added to the Priority Lands base layer in SMART for the purpose of viewing and tracking program accomplishments with respect to landscape priorities. Raster data should consist of the following values or classes:

- "No Data"—Areas outside of the State boundary.
- "0" (Non Stewardship Potential)—Areas within the State boundary that are not eligible for Forest Stewardship or Rural Forestry Assistance Program delivery, including Federal lands, large water bodies, and urban centers that are not considered to be part of the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI).
- "1" (Stewardship Potential)—Areas within the State that are eligible for Forest Stewardship and Rural Forestry Assistance Program delivery, but are not considered a priority.
- "2" (High Stewardship Potential)—State priority areas, or "Forest Stewardship Priority Areas" as defined by the National Forest Stewardship Program Standards and Guidelines, including areas within the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI).

Additional instructions for geospatial data:

- Delivered in ESRI GRID format (raster)
- GRID cell size: 30 meters by 30 meters is preferred (or multiples of 30 meters, e.g., 90 meters by 90 meters)
- GRID projection: **World Eckert VI projection** with “**D_WGS_1984**” datum
- GRID files must be compressed into a zip file and delivered with the following naming convention: **<USPS state abbreviation>_PL.zip**, for e.g. the State of Maine would be **ME_PL.zip**

Uploading Forest Stewardship Program Priority Areas: The USDA Forest Service has an external collaboration folder in Pinyon (a.k.a. Box) for the receipt of updated priority area information from States. Individuals must receive a collaboration invitation from Box and have a free Box user account to upload priority datasets. Send collaboration requests to Peter Bedker (peter.j.bedker@usda.gov) and include names, email addresses, and phone numbers for the individuals who need access. Please allow two business days for these access requests to be serviced.

Grant Narratives

Grant narratives for Forest Stewardship; Conservation Education (where appropriate); and Reforestation, Nurseries, and Genetic Resources (RNGR) are to be combined in one proposal, and are expected to include targets for **all required reporting data for FY 2020**. If States expect no accomplishments for those elements, zero is the appropriate target. States with active seedling nursery programs, who receive RNGR

Fiscal Year 2020 Financial Advice to States

funds as part of their Forest Stewardship Program allocation, should provide targets in the grant narrative for numbers of seedlings produced, acres of seed orchard/seed production area maintained, and amount of improved/source-identified seed collected, or an appropriate combination of these. The generic 2020 Grant Narrative template can be found at the [Grants Narrative Formats web page](#).

Any efforts to address the following items should be highlighted in the narrative:

- Opportunities to utilize the Forest Stewardship Program to achieve State Forest Action Plans
- Program delivery in Important Forest Resource Areas
- Landscape-scale stewardship planning
- Enhancing financial viability of private forest ownership
- Climate change adaptation and mitigation
- Water quality and supply
- Biomass energy
- Forest certification
- USDA cost-share programs
- Ecosystem services markets
- Community wildfire protection planning integration
- Efforts to integrate Forest Stewardship and Urban & Community Forestry to address loss of open space concerns
- Conservation-based estate planning
- Management and control of invasive species

Please contact your [S&PF Field Office Forest Stewardship Coordinator](#) if you have questions.

Accomplishment Reporting/Targeting Template

The following table can be completed and copy/pasted into the grant narrative template.

National Accomplishment/Performance Measure	Grant Target
Number of landowners receiving Forest Stewardship Program technical assistance	[enter target]
Number of landowners participating in Forest Stewardship Program educational programs	[enter target]
Acres of new and/or revised Forest Stewardship Management Plans	[enter target]
Acres of new and/or revised Forest Stewardship Management Plans in <i>Important Forest Resource Areas</i>	[enter target]
Number of new and/or revised Forest Stewardship Management Plans	[enter target]
Total acres covered by current Forest Stewardship Management Plans (cumulative)	[enter target]
Total acres in <i>Important Forest Resource Areas</i> covered by current Forest Stewardship Management Plans (cumulative)	[enter target]
Base non-industrial private forest (NIPF) landowner acres in <i>Important Forest Resource Areas</i>	N/A
Number of acres in forest areas being managed sustainably as defined by current Forest Stewardship Management Plan (cumulative) through a nationally consistent monitoring program	[enter target]
Number of new and/or revised Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) Management Plans	[enter target]
Acres of new and/or revised EQIP Management Plans	[enter target]
Acres covered by practice plans or other forest management plans	[enter target]
Acres in Important Forest Resource Areas covered by practice plans or other forest management plans	[enter target]
Acres covered by Landscape Stewardship Plans	[enter target]
Acres of Important Forest Resource Areas covered by Landscape Stewardship Plans	[enter target]
Number of seedlings produced and/or distributed	[enter target]
Pounds of improved seed collected and/or produced	[enter target]

S&PF Forest Stewardship Program Optional Reporting Metrics

States are encouraged to report (optional) program accomplishments that focus on Stewardship Program impacts not traditionally captured by SMART. States needing assistance identifying reporting elements should contact their [S&PF Field Office Forest Stewardship Coordinator](#). It is appropriate to include accomplishments generated by large-scale watershed projects, Chesapeake Bay Program, New York City Watershed, and other USDA Forest Service-funded programs in the Optional Metrics. Optional Metric

Fiscal Year 2020 Financial Advice to States

reporting includes both cost-share and non-cost-shared activities. A listing of the Optional Metrics appears at the end of this narrative. **This information is due by October 6, 2020.** Please submit this as an email to your [S&PF Field Office Forest Stewardship Coordinator](#).

Program Impacts and Supporting Performance Measures (reported annually)

Elements listed below in **bold** represent National Program Reporting Elements, which are required to be submitted annually via SMART. Optional S&PF Metrics are listed below in normal text. States are encouraged to track and report these Optional Metrics to the [S&PF Field Office Forest Stewardship Coordinator](#), where practical, to illustrate program impacts within the State.

Note: Only quantitative measures are included here. Qualitative information such as success stories can also be submitted to demonstrate program impacts. State-specific quantitative measures of program impact not listed below can also be submitted.

Outcome 1: Private forest owners practice sustainable forest management.

Program activities that can contribute to achieving this program impact include contact with landowners, Forest Stewardship Plan development, cost-share assistance, forest certification assistance, support of peer-to-peer networks, workshops or field trips, and web-based landowner assistance and education. The following measures can be reported towards this impact:

1. Contacts with landowners:

1.1. Landowners who received technical assistance (includes phone contacts, site visits, email contacts, mailings, plan preparation, etc.).

- **(SMART) # of landowners** , # of acres
- # of landowners within spatially defined Important Forest Resource Areas
- # of acres within spatially defined Important Forest Resource Areas

1.2. Landowners who follow professional forestry advice when implementing a timber harvest or otherwise implementing management.

- # of landowners referred to private foresters
- # of acres referred to private foresters
- # Sawtimber harvested million BF
- # Roundwood harvested (cords/pulp) cords or tons
- Timber harvested According to Prescription acres harvested

1.3. Improvement practices applied.

- Forest Stand Establishment (reforestation/afforestation) acres
 - Forest Stand Improvement total acres
- Subset: Wood fiber production acres
Wildlife enhancement acres
Fire/fuel reduction acres
Protection from insects and disease acres
Recreation and archeological enhancement acres
Roads or trails constructed/improved miles

1.4. Landowners who have participated in education programs, e.g., workshops, field trips, or public meetings.

- **(SMART) # of landowners** , # of acres
- # of participating landowners within spatially defined Important Forest Resource Areas
- # of acres within spatially defined Important Forest Resource Areas

1.5. Landowners in peer-to-peer networks and Woodland Owner Associations, etc.

- # of landowners

Fiscal Year 2020 Financial Advice to States

- # of landowners within spatially defined Important Forest Resource Areas _____
- 1.6. Web-based landowner assistance
 - # of web applications _____ # of hits to web applications _____
 2. Individual forest management plans for NIPF landowners:
 - 2.1. Forest management plans that don't meet Forest Stewardship Plan criteria, (e.g. Tree Farm, Tax Plans, Conservation Easement Plans, EQIP Plans)
 - # of plans _____, acres of plans _____
 - 2.2. (SMART) New and/or revised Forest Stewardship Plans**
 - # of Forest Stewardship Plans SMART
 - Acres of Forest Stewardship Plans SMART
 - # of Forest Stewardship Plans in spatially defined Important Forest Resource Areas SMART
 - Acres of Forest Stewardship Plans in spatially defined Important Forest Resource Areas SMART
 - 2.3. (SMART) New and/or revised EQIP Plans (Practice 106)**
 - # of Plans SMART
 - # of acres SMART
 - 2.4. (SMART) Base NIPF acres spatially defined as Important Forest Resource Areas**
 - # of acres SMART
 - 2.5. (SMART) The cumulative total number of acres covered by current Forest Stewardship Plans**
 - # of acres SMART
 - # of acres in spatially defined Important Forest Resource Areas SMART
 - 2.6. (SMART) Acres from Measure 2.5 confirmed as being managed sustainably, by field visits to a representative random sample of Forest Stewardship Plan properties, following established plan monitoring procedures.**
 - # of acres SMART
 - 2.7. NIPF land third party certification during the reporting year (SFI, FSC, Tree Farm).
 - # of acres certified _____

Outcome 2: Communities and stakeholders are engaged in the benefits of forest stewardship.

Program activities that can contribute to achieving this program impact include contact with communities (e.g., towns, cities, watershed groups, conservation organizations, etc.) and developing landscape plans. The following measures can be reported towards this impact:

3. Communities are engaged in and appreciate the benefits of forest stewardship.
 - 3.1. Programs conducted to promote forest stewardship (includes workshops, field trips, or public meetings where the community is the focus rather than the individual landowner)
 - # of programs _____, # of individuals _____
 - 3.2. Stakeholders engaged in community-based, landscape-stewardship effort.
 - # of stakeholders _____
 - 3.3. Local policies, regulations, laws, resolutions, etc. that support forest stewardship.
 - # of policies _____
 - 3.4. Communities where natural resource advisory groups, tree boards, conservation commissions, land trusts, etc. are established and engaged in the promotion of forest stewardship.
 - # of communities _____

Fiscal Year 2020 Financial Advice to States

4. Landscape-Scale Forest Stewardship Plans are developed.
 - 4.1. Community-based landscape stewardship plans or projects
 - # of Landscape-Scale Forest Stewardship Plans/projects
 - # of acres covered by Landscape-Scale Forest Stewardship Plans/projects
 - Cumulative # of Landscape-Scale Forest Stewardship Plans or projects
 - Cumulative # of acres covered by current Landscape-Scale Forest Stewardship Plans or projects
 - 4.2. The percentage of NIPF landowners engaged with forest stewardship within the Landscape-Scale Stewardship Plan or project area. (Reported by individual plan/project area)
 - Name of plan/project area . Percentage of engaged landowners %

Add additional projects here as appropriate.

Outcome 3: Private forests are protected from conversion to non-forests.

Program activities that can contribute to achieving this program impact include contact with landowners, development of conservation easements, and participation in a State's conservation tax program. The following measures can be reported towards this impact:

5. NIPF land is protected from conversion to non-forest uses.
 - 5.1. Landowners contacted to discuss opportunities for protecting forest land from conversion to non-forest use.
 - # of targeted landowners contacted
 - 5.2. Conservation easements established on NIPF land
 - # of conservation easements , # acres of conservation easements
 - 5.3. Land enrolled in State conservation tax programs, e.g., current use
 - Acres , percentage of eligible land

Outreach and Education: Report Forest Stewardship education accomplishments focused on outreach and education to K-12 students, educators, and families (if any) to the [NatureWatch, Interpretation and Conservation Education database \(NICE\)](#) by **October 15, 2020**. Examples of reportable accomplishments include a *Game of Logging* certification program for a Career and Technical Education program, and assisting with an Envirothon program. Consult the User's Manual on the NICE home page for instructions. You can create reports throughout the FY and can group like events in one report.

Watershed Forestry: Chesapeake Bay and New York City Watersheds

Allocation

In FY 2020, as in previous years, funds will be allocated for watershed forestry activities through partnerships with States and other organizations through the Chesapeake Bay and New York City (NYC) Watershed Forestry Programs. It is recognized that some States are implementing watershed actions through other Cooperative Forestry programs that are worthy of highlighting individually or through success stories.

Direction

There is a clear connection between forestry practices and water quality. Because of this, States are encouraged, within the parameters of [Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act¹ program authorities](#) (i.e., Forest Stewardship, Forest Legacy, and Urban and Community Forestry) to enhance, restore, or conserve targeted watersheds. Some of the best practices used to improve watersheds are biogeographic or social science analyses of important forestry activities, watershed-based planning and partnerships, targeted assistance, demonstration projects, education, and engagement of targeted audiences. The grant monitor may provide supplemental and more specific program guidance to States.

Grant Narratives

In their narratives, States are encouraged to highlight activities that specifically address watershed issues and strategic objectives or participation in watershed partnership projects. Narratives are required for State participation in watershed partnership projects in the Chesapeake Bay and NYC Watersheds. For Chesapeake Bay questions contact [Sally Claggett \(sally.claggett@usda.gov\)](mailto:sally.claggett@usda.gov). For NYC Watershed questions, contact [Karl Honkonen \(karl.w.honkonen@usda.gov\)](mailto:karl.w.honkonen@usda.gov).

For the Chesapeake Bay, States should strive to accelerate forestry Best Management Practices identified as important to State Watershed Implementation Plans (e.g., riparian reforestation) that support the regulated Chesapeake Total Maximum Daily Load. Of secondary importance are actions recommended in the [Chesapeake Forest Restoration Strategy](#) or the [Chesapeake Working Lands Conservation Strategy](#). These documents, and [The State of Chesapeake Forests](#), provide good background on the importance of certain forest actions for the health of the Chesapeake watershed.

Accountability

Accomplishment reporting for projects in DC, DE, MD, NY, PA, VA, and WV within the Chesapeake Bay Watershed is as follows: 1) miles and acres of riparian forest buffer restored (if only miles or acres, then width of buffer is required); and 2) acres of expanded urban tree canopy. These two accomplishments feed into the annual progress reporting at the Chesapeake Bay Program. Acres of forest conservation are also part of annual reporting, but will be tracked at a regional level using, in part, the Protected Lands Database. States will be consulted as these data are compiled.

Acres and width (or miles) of riparian buffers restored between July 1, 2019, and June 30, 2020, will be compiled from data sent by each Bay State to the Chesapeake Bay model. Acres of tree canopy expansion will be collected in the same manner. State forestry agencies should ensure that the State data that is sent for forestry practices is accurate **before November 13, 2020**. Accomplishment reporting for the forestry program of New York's Watershed Agricultural Council falls into the watershed forestry education program core area. The Watershed Agricultural Council will submit an accomplishments report to the S&PF Director by **December 31, 2020**.

Urban and Community Forestry (UCF) Program

Allocation

For FY 2020, S&PF continues to apply the performance allocation methodology approved by Congress in 2006. Allocation of funds to States is based on community output data submitted to the Community Accomplishment Reporting System (CARS) the previous year. The USDA Forest Service uses the total United States Census population of communities that are reported by States as managing or developing their urban forest programs as the basis for allocating available performance funding.

Please note, to be eligible for the full \$200,000 minimum funding, each State's basic Urban and Community Forestry (UCF) program should meet the four program standards: a full-time program coordinator, full-time or equivalent volunteer/partnership coordination capacity, active State advisory council, and current 5-year plan that may be included in the State Forest Action Plan. These four standards should be addressed in the program narrative. S&PF may withhold funding to States if they are not meeting these basic standards. State Foresters may elect to participate in the travel program through the NMSFA agreement with West Virginia University, lowering their final allocation by the amount requested for travel.

Program Narrative Direction

Please use the Program/Project Narrative document provided on the [Grants Narrative Formats web page](#) (click on "Blank Narrative Formats, Grant Narrative Summary") to guide development of your annual request. The information below is meant to provide additional instruction and clarity derived from national program authorities and guidance.

- **Purpose:** The purpose section should reference specific strategies and goals that address priority issues identified in the approved State Forest Action Plans and Urban and Community Forest Plans, which contribute to State and national performance measures in UCF. Core program activities are those that lead to the establishment of self-sustaining local UCF programs that improve the condition and extent of trees and forests in cities, suburbs, and towns. The purpose of the Federal UCF Program is "to provide financial, technical, educational and related assistance to State foresters to assist communities to plan urban forestry programs and to plant, protect, maintain, and utilize wood from community trees and forests to maximize social, environmental, and economic benefits."
- **Scope of Work:** List the priority program objectives as the basis of your scope of work (these should be tied to the State Forest Action Plan). In the scope of work, please note any significant changes in State program direction from the previous year.

In addition, the Forest Service encourages States to focus Federal UCF Program assistance and outreach efforts on helping foster resilient, adaptive forest ecosystems and deliver benefits to the public. One or more of the objectives in your scope of work should tie to the following:

- Increase the number of communities and affected populations achieving "developing" and "managing" status.
- Protect, enhance, and expand urban tree canopy cover to maximize human health, social, ecological, and economic benefits.
- Encourage long-term forest planning and management.
- Encourage proactive and systematic maintenance and monitoring of urban trees to improve forest health; assess risk to forest pests, disease, and adverse climate impacts; and formulate adaptive management strategies to improve forest resilience.
- Advance the use of tree and forest inventories, monitoring, and assessment tools in priority areas.
- Strengthen the value that urban residents place on trees, forests, and forestry.
- Protect and enhance watersheds in urban and developing areas with a focus on green stormwater infrastructure.

Fiscal Year 2020 Financial Advice to States

- Support the creation and maintenance of green jobs and economic opportunities for planning and sustainably maintaining trees and forests, and producing and using forest products.
 - Address exotic invasive pest species that typically affect and emanate from urban forests.
 - Work across jurisdictional boundaries, leveraging ideas and resources to increase capacity to provide benefits across the larger landscape and at a greater geographic scale.
 - Aid in planning, goal setting, and skill sharing with other professions such as urban planners, engineers, and public health officials.
 - Improve preparation for severe storms and the recovery of damaged or deteriorated landscapes to more healthy and resilient conditions.
 - Foster individuals, groups, and organizations in the communities served to become engaged participants in urban forestry, especially those in communities that do not have adequate resources.
 - Diversify, leverage, and increase funding for Urban and Community Forestry.
- **Methodology:** For each objective listed in the scope of work above, include a description of specific activities written in the form of SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-bound) that will help achieve each objective. *For example:*
 - *Fund up to 15 small grants in the first year to restore community trees damaged by storms.*
 - *Provide career and job training in utility arboriculture to 35 adjudicated youth living in New Bedford and Fall River, before the end of the sixth quarter of this agreement.*
 - *Support tree canopy data collection and analysis for the Chicago Metro Agency for Planning in the second year of this agreement.*

Include in the methodology a description of how the State addresses the four Forest Service standards for UCF Program participation (program coordinator, volunteer/partnership coordination capacity, active advisory council, and strategic plan).

- **Timeline:** Provide a general timeline to identify when key activities will be done. The timeline can be done as a separate list or table, or included in the descriptions of activities in the Methodology section.

Accomplishment Reporting Requirements:

States are required to track and report annual accomplishments for the Federal fiscal year using the Community Accomplishments Reporting System (CARS). CARS data are due by **October 15, 2020**. CARS is housed at the USDA Forest Service [National Information Center \(NIC\) website](#), is available for reporting and tracking performance year round, and has secure access with a unique user name and password for each user. Please contact the [S&PF Field Office UCF Program Manager](#) regarding directions for access to CARS.

States must report the total number of hours of volunteer service contributed to their UCF Programs and carefully track and report on the following elements achieved in each community:

1. **Management Plans:** Urban and community tree and forest management plans, developed from professionally based resource assessments / inventories.
2. **Professional Staffing:** Individuals who have one or more of the following credentials and who are directly employed or retained through written agreement to advise and/or assist in planting, protection, and maintenance of urban and community trees and forests:
 - Degree in forestry or related field
 - International Society of Arboriculture certified arborist or equivalent professional certification
3. **Ordinances/Policies:** Local/statewide ordinances or policies that focus on planting, protecting, and maintaining urban and community trees and forests.

Fiscal Year 2020 Financial Advice to States

4. **Advocacy/Advisory Organizations:** Active tree boards, commissions, or non-profit organizations that are formalized or chartered to advise/advocate for the planting, protection, and maintenance of urban and community trees and forests.
5. **State Assistance:** Technical, financial, and/or educational assistance provided through the State Program since the last report.

Communities that have the first four elements are “Managing” their urban forest resources; communities that have fewer than four of the elements and have received State assistance in the current year are “Developing.” **States are expected to document the elements above for each community, including State assistance, on an ongoing basis and be prepared to make this information available on request.**

Utilize the target form (below) to list final outputs (managing and developing communities, and volunteer hours) from 2019 and estimate the planned targets for 2020. This form should be pasted into the written program narrative. Targets that change significantly should be explained.

Urban and Community Forestry CARS Target Form:

Accomplishment/Performance Measure	Measure Type	2019 Final	2020 Target
CARS Number “Managing” Communities	National		
CARS Number “Developing” Communities	National		
Enter Additional Measure (if any)	State		
Enter Additional Measure (if any)	State		

Final data submitted in CARS in 2019:

State	2019 Managing	2019 Developing	2019 Volunteer Hours
Connecticut	40	128,125	15,000
Delaware	39	15	3,195
District of Columbia	1	0	11,125
Illinois	137	5,775	2,148
Indiana	55	35	37,349
Iowa	28	270	3,731
Maine	39	147	8,045
Maryland	184	334	60,000
Massachusetts	43	174	28,226
Michigan	79	164	7,829
Minnesota	126	119	29,149
Missouri	73	48	51,096
New Hampshire	68	95	8,305
New Jersey	279	127	11,109
New York	98	157	84,377
Ohio	71	205	42,775
Pennsylvania	249	180	25,278
Rhode Island	17	8	3,202
Vermont	24	75	17,425
West Virginia	3	57	7,745
Wisconsin	113	144	3,995

Fiscal Year 2020 Financial Advice to States

Additionally, States are expected to submit to CARS a list of UCF State subgrants (including “pass-through” funds to State partners and cooperators in the form of contracts and agreements) awarded over the past fiscal year. Minimum Information includes recipient name; community; purpose; and amount contributed by Federal, State, and Local entities. Other Federal and State funds contributing to core program accomplishments should be included in this reporting.

In addition to CARS, reporting requirements include a written report (two to three pages) that describes and highlights State technical, financial, and/or educational assistance. The report should answer the question: **How are Forest Service dollars making a difference at the State and local level?**

The report should include the following in the order shown:

1. State Urban Forestry Coordinator contact: name, address, phone, e-mail address, and website
2. State UCF Program Overview
3. State UCF Program Highlights: identify and summarize at least three projects, activities, and/or outcomes that illustrate the results of State program assistance.
4. Digital photographs (>300 dpi and with captions) that show program activities

Note: Data collected during local inventory and assessment projects should be retained and made available on request to the Forest Service.

Outreach and Education: Report Urban and Community Forestry education accomplishments focused on outreach and education to K-12 students, educators, and families (if any) to the [NatureWatch, Interpretation and Conservation Education database \(NICE\)](#) by October 15, 2020. Examples of reportable accomplishments include assisting schools or youth groups in using i-Tree, and working with a school to green the school grounds or nearby open space. Consult the User’s Manual on the NICE home page for instructions. You can create reports throughout the FY and can group like events in one report.

Forest Legacy Program (FLP)

Allocation

Forest Legacy Program (FLP) funding allocation to the States includes project and administrative funds.

Project funds are for the acquisition of lands or interests in lands that are identified in specific projects. The priority list of projects is decided by congressional appropriations committees based on advice from a national project selection panel. Funds for some projects will likely be derived from prior year appropriations, as required by Congress. Project funds can include and be used for directly associated acquisition activities for the tracts. The FLP FY 2020 projects ascertain and protect environmentally important forest areas that are threatened by conversion to non-forest uses. Funds for each FLP project must be requested in a separate Forest Legacy project grant application. Federal FLP project funds cannot fund monitoring, management, or enforcement activities.

Administrative funds are allocated by specific State needs to be used for day-to-day State FLP administration. These funds may be used for project acquisition activities, such as title searches, appraisals, easement drafting, negotiations, and other related work to make the highest priority State projects ready for future-year funding. This will help the States respond to the National Priority List criterion on readiness. Additionally, administrative funds can be used to amend a State FLP. Administrative funds may also be used to purchase supplies to facilitate the transition to a digital document handling system. FLP administrative funds must be requested in a separate Forest Legacy administration grant application. Federal FLP administration funds cannot fund monitoring, management, or enforcement activities.

Direction

Only FLP projects approved by congressional appropriations committees may be funded through the FLP. This year may require the use of prior-year funds to fund approved projects. The prior-year funds may not arrive in to S&PF as quickly as the appropriated funds. In light of this, approved FLP project grants will be funded in the order the grant applications are received. The FY 2020 FLP projects have been selected based on three core criteria that relate to both assisting mitigation of and adaptation to climate change: (1) environmental importance of the property; (2) threat of conversion to a non-forest; and (3) strategic position on the landscape and connection with other protected lands.

Approval from the State Forest Stewardship Coordinating Committee (SFSCC) is required for changes in specific project activities, including approving tracts where specific tracts have not been identified within a project. Please notify the [S&PF FLP Program Manager](#) if a project changes from the description in the grant agreement. The FLP Program Manager will look for project change approval by the SFSCC prior to reviewing changes in the project. Excess project funds and funds from failed projects will be returned to the USDA Forest Service for national distribution. The grant agreements will provide direction related to appraisal format and instructions, as well as negotiation instructions to address FLP conservation easement drafting. Information regarding FLP can be found in the [Forest Legacy Program Implementation Guidelines](#).

Accomplishment Reporting Requirements

The following reporting requirements and timeframe required by the Forest Legacy Program include:

- **Annual status reports** on each outstanding Forest Legacy grant.
- **The Forest Legacy Information System (FLIS)** must be updated by the **States within 10 days of the information changing** so that there is current data for periodic reports to respond to Congressional and Agency requests. All FY accomplishments must be updated by **October 15, 2020**. FLIS is an online accessible database, housed on the [National Information Center \(NIC\) website](#), that is used

Fiscal Year 2020 Financial Advice to States

for many purposes in the FLP. FLIS is accessed with a unique user name and password for each user. Please contact the S&PF Program Manager regarding directions for access to FLIS.

Outreach and Education: Report FLP accomplishments focused on outreach and education to K-12 students, educators, and families (if any) to the [NatureWatch, Interpretation and Conservation Education database \(NICE\)](#) by October 15, 2020. Examples of reportable accomplishments include supporting or assisting with workshops for families or community members to learn about a Forest Legacy property or using a Forest Legacy property for a summer youth program. Consult the User's Manual on the NICE home page for instructions. Reports can be created throughout the FY and like events can be grouped in one report.

Community Forest and Open Space Conservation Program (CFP)

Allocation

CFP funding allocations to Tribes, local governments, and eligible nonprofit organizations includes project funds. **Project funds** are for the acquisition of lands that are identified in specific projects. The priority list of projects is decided by a national multi-disciplinary team in the Forest Service. Project funds can include and be used for directly associated acquisition activities for the tracts. CFP FY 2020 projects protect important forests that provide multiple public benefits, including recreation and educational opportunities. Funds for each CFP project must be requested in a separate CFP project grant application.

Direction

Only CFP projects selected by the national CFP selection panel and identified may be funded by the Community Forest and Open Space Conservation Program. Approved CFP project grants will be funded in the order the grant applications are received. The FY 2020 CFP projects have been selected based on four core criteria: (1) type and extent of community benefits provided, including to underserved communities (CFP benefits are defined as economic, environmental, educational, and recreational); (2) extent and nature of community engagement in the establishment and long-term management of the community forest; (3) extent to which the community forest contributes to a landscape conservation initiative; and (4) likelihood that the property would be converted to nonforest uses if unprotected.

Please notify [Neal Bungard \(neal.bungard@usda.gov\)](mailto:neal.bungard@usda.gov), CFP Program Manager, if a project changes from the description in the grant agreement. The expectation is that projects will not have significant changes. Excess project funds and funds from failed projects will be returned to the USDA Forest Service for distribution to under-funded tracts or tracts next in priority. The grant agreements provide direction related to acquisition requirements and post-acquisition requirements for the CFP. Information regarding the CFP can be found in the [Community Forest Program Handbook Road Map and Appendices](#).

Accomplishment Reporting Requirements

Annual status reports are required for each outstanding Community Forest grant. All FY accomplishments must be updated and reported by **October 15, 2020**. Report all CFP accomplishments that include, but are not limited to, CFP dollars expended and acres acquired. Report accomplishments to S&PF Community Forest Program Manager [Neal Bungard \(neal.bungard@usda.gov\)](mailto:neal.bungard@usda.gov).

Outreach and Education: Report CFP accomplishments focused on outreach and education to K-12 students, educators, and families (if any) to the [NatureWatch, Interpretation and Conservation Education database \(NICE\)](#) by October 15, 2020. Examples of reportable accomplishments include supporting or assisting with workshops for families or community members to learn about a CFP property or using a CFP property for a summer youth program. Consult the User's Manual on the NICE home page for instructions. You can create reports throughout the FY and can group like events in one report.

Conservation Education (CE) Program

Allocation

National Program Direction commits S&PF to implement a Conservation Education (CE) Program. Funds for CE are included in the total State allocation. States are provided latitude to fund CE from one or several core programs at a level that best meets our common CE goals.

Direction

The CE program addresses a national priority of the Forest Service. It provides technical and financial assistance to State forestry agencies and other organizations to help them create an informed public that can make wise decisions that affect forests and other natural resources. Emphasis should be on key issues identified in State Forest Action Plans along with Forest Service priorities and S&PF Objectives.

The CE program focuses its specific educational efforts on children (pre-kindergarten through 12th grade) and their educators in both classroom and informal settings. Meaningful outdoor nature education experiences for youth are preferred. Participation in the [Every Kid Outdoors Program](#) and posting outdoor opportunities to [Discover The Forest](#) are encouraged. CE also coordinates with other Forest Service educational programs directed toward adults to ensure continuity and consistency of educational materials from childhood to adulthood. Use of the [North American Association for Environmental Education \(NAAEE\) Guidelines for Excellence in Environmental Education](#) is encouraged.

CE activities and funding levels should be described in the narratives for the core programs that will fund those activities. A CE contact must be identified in the narrative.

Accomplishment Reporting Requirements

Outreach and Education: Report CE accomplishments during FY 2020, regardless of year of funding, to the [NatureWatch, Interpretation and Conservation Education database \(NICE\)](#) by October 15, 2020. Consult the User's Manual on the NICE home page for instructions. You can create reports throughout the FY and can group like events in one report. Contact Susan Cox (603-868-7706, susan.m.cox@usda.gov) or Lisa Myers (414-944-3590, lisa.j.myers@usda.gov) with questions or to request training for NICE. Note: Some core program grant reporting can be met by appending the NICE report to the core program grant report.

Grant Management and Process Information

Important topics concerning grant processes and operational changes are highlighted below. Also visit the [S&PF Financial Advice to States website](#) for a more comprehensive listing of grant-related topics.

Contact Information

The Grants staff is available to assist you in all aspects of grants administration. In order to expedite processing of your application, please submit all electronic applications and other official correspondence to the shared inbox SM.FS.R9SPFgrants@usda.gov. This inbox is monitored daily, if not hourly. A response to acknowledge your question or the proposal or modification submission will be returned with a copy to the assigned specialist. Your submission of a full and accurately completed grant package(s), timely response to any inquiries from S&PF staff about your grant application(s), and quickly signing and returning your grant award letter(s) will expedite the grant award process.

New For Fiscal Year (FY) 2020

ezFedGrants is on indefinite hold for the Forest Service

The Forest Service will not transition to ezFedGrants at this time. Any further information will be given when we have news.

Consolidated Payment Grants (CPGs)

The intent of Congress in authorizing a consolidated payment grant (CPG) system under the [Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act](#)¹ was to reduce the burden of paperwork on the States. It can also reduce the burden to the USDA Forest Service for program oversight if the reports and invoices are very clear about programs being reported/invoiced and reporting takes place once a year in a concise and clear manner easily tracked by both the State program and Forest Service program staff. Because these awards often follow an annual reporting period, we encourage our partners to submit one performance report that covers the entire program funded in the award. SF424 Financial Reports should reflect the total award and not be split between the funded programs. We ask that the SF270s, if billing multiple programs, be clearly annotated at the top header row for each column of expenses. Examples of these can be provided.

Electronic Signatures

The Forest Service may now accept electronic signatures (e-signatures). Documents will be sent out as Adobe PDF (Portable Document Format) files with e-signature lines and date blocks. A partner only needs a current [Adobe Acrobat Reader](#) in order to e-sign the PDF. We encourage e-signatures for a more seamless format, e.g., Forest Service signature officials can e-sign a PDF even when in travel status. If an e-signature process is not allowable, then submit a scan of the signature page with a wet ink signature.

SAM Registration

The [System for Award Management \(SAM\)](#) continues to be integral to our business and grants management. On February 2, 2019, SAM implemented a new process that allows financial assistance registrants to submit common Federal government-wide representations and certifications. This process replaced the **SF424B: Assurances—NonConstruction Programs document**. A recipient will need to have renewed their registration after February 2, 2019, for this process to have been completed.

A further note regarding SAM Registration: The Forest Service financial office will not process an award for obligation if a SAM registration expires within 60 days of the obligation. This is due to the number of

Fiscal Year 2020 Financial Advice to States

awards the agency processes for submission to the Data Center for reporting at the [USAspending.gov website](https://www.usaspending.gov). Corrections for data errors are time consuming. The SAM registration must also be active and in good standing at the time of the proposal submission and throughout the life of the award.

Additional Important Information

Program Authorities and Performance

The work performed in Federal financial assistance instruments must align to the program authorities supporting the project. It is the responsibility of both the Forest Service program and grants management staff, along with the recipient, to ensure that the activities described in the scope of work for a grant conform to the permissible activities under that authority. The appropriate scope of work for each program is described in the [“Program Specific Information” section of this document](#).

In order to efficiently manage grant projects and minimize the number of time extension requests submitted for consideration, it is recommended that the performance period for your grant awards be submitted with a **3- to 4-year timeframe**. If needed, a **one-time grant extension may be requested**. **However, the grant award cannot exceed a 5-year time limit**. If the project is completed and all allowable costs are liquidated prior to the expiration date, final reports should be submitted and the grant will be closed. This recommendation applies to projects funded with State and Private Forestry funds.

Exceptions are as follows:

- Forest Legacy project funds
- Community Forest Program project funds
- Great Lakes Restoration Initiative
- Conservation Reserve Program
- Emergency Forest Restoration Program
- Grants awarded with funds received from other Federal agencies

Grant Narrative Formats

The grant narrative formats designed by the State and Private Forestry Board for noncompetitive (core) funding continue to be in effect for FY 2020. These formats were developed to provide a simple and flexible template that incorporates the Forest Action Plans for our State partners. The narrative formats, background information, and guidelines are on our [Grants Narrative Formats web page](#) and should be used in conjunction with the program information provided in the [Program Specific Information section of this document](#).

Reporting Timeframes

The Forest Service has established standard reporting timeframes for interim financial and accomplishment reporting for all open grants and agreements. The due dates for interim reports are no longer based on the start date of the award/project. The interim reports are due based on a calendar year schedule as outlined in the award letter. The reporting period of the award begins upon the final Forest Signature Date, which is also known as the execution date. The starting date of an award as identified in the proposal package and the award simply allows the proper timing of the work and expenses for the project/program.

If our award letter states:	Reporting Period	Due to the Grants Specialist by:
Annual Reports	December 31	No later than March 31
Semi-annual reports	June 30 and December 31	July 31 and January 31

Fiscal Year 2020 Financial Advice to States

If our award letter states:	Reporting Period	Due to the Grants Specialist by:
Quarterly reports	March 31, June 30, September 30, and December 31	April 30, July 31, October 31, and January 31

There has been no change to the submission of final financial and accomplishment reporting. These reports are still due to the Grants Management Specialists **within** 90 days of the expiration date or earlier if all goals are accomplished and final bills paid.

Timely submission of interim and final accomplishment and financial reports is critical to comply with the terms and condition of the grant award. These reports support not only the Forest Service program staffs in their monitoring duties but help the Forest Service comply with audit requirements. These reports are also a vehicle to tell the story of the great work you are accomplishing in support of S&PF.

Recipients who do not submit timely final reports will be placed on a non-responsive list. Recipients on this list are not eligible for future awards until all missing reports are provided by the recipient and approved by Forest Service program staff. Our goal is to work together to ensure that we meet all administrative compliance requirements as outlined in grant regulations. **As of February 16, 2020, all recipients with missing reports will no longer have invoices approved in our financial system until the missing performance or financial reports are received and approved by program. This requirement has been instituted by the National Business office in our financial system.**

Financial Capability Statements

All new grant recipients must complete a [Financial Capability Questionnaire](#) and checklist to assess internal processes to ensure proper financial management of grant funds. A returning grant recipient will complete only a Financial Capability Checklist. The form(s) may be completed with your first grant application and will be kept on file for the remainder of FY 2020.

A [Financial Capability Checklist for State Government Agencies](#) must be completed for FY 2020 awards with State agencies. Information in the form provides a framework for reviewing grantees' internal processes.

These and other grant application documents are on our [Grants Application Documents web page](#).

Civil Rights Pre-Award Certification

Compliance in Equal Opportunity program delivery includes ensuring that no one is denied an equal opportunity to participate in, receive benefits from, and receive access to any program or service funded by the Federal government. Program delivery, nondiscrimination compliance applies to both Federally conducted programs and Federally assisted programs.

All recipients will be contacted by a Forest Service Program Manager who will conduct a pre-award review using a checklist ([Civil Rights Compliance Review Record](#)) developed by our Washington Office Civil Rights staff. This is an opportunity to engage in a discussion of your Civil Rights program and to assist you in areas where deficiencies have been found. This compliance interview is conducted once annually for each recipient organization that is receiving funds during that fiscal year.

Submission of Invoices (SF-270)

Recipients are encouraged to submit payment requests using the [SF270, Request for Advance or Reimbursement](#) form on a timely basis on projects where work is being accomplished. It is recommended that invoices be submitted on a monthly basis. Exceptions to this timeframe can be made as needed should funds be required more often due to project timelines. Submit all invoices to the [ASC inbox at SM.FS.asc_ga@usda.gov](#). Submitting invoices to the S&PF inbox will delay invoice handling because our staff has no ability to process an invoice into the Natural Resource Manager (NRM) database.

Fiscal Year 2020 Financial Advice to States

When invoicing for a Consolidate Payment Grant (CPG) on the SF270, please clearly annotate in the header column block each funding program currently requesting payment for the time period of the invoice. The SF270 may be more than one page long because the total for that request is reflected on only one total column of the set (either the first or the last page).

Upon expiration of a project, please submit final payment requests within the 90-day closeout period. **Final payment will not be approved until the final report has been received and approved, so take this in consideration when submitting your final invoice.**

Forest Service auditors are closely monitoring funds remaining after the expiration date of a project, along with open projects that have no payment activity in 11 months or more. It is the responsibility of both the Forest Service and our partners to ensure that we are being fiscally responsible with our Federal dollars.

Correspondence for Applications, Modifications, and Reporting

Email ALL applications and modification requests to SM.FS.R9SPFgrants@usda.gov for processing by the Grants Management staff. The subject line should contain the Field Office acronym (DFO, MFO, or SPFO); State; whether it's a New Application or Modification (if a modification, please include the agreement number); and project title. Here are example email subject lines:

- For a new application: MFO_MD_New Application Consolidate Payment Grant
- For a modification: DFO_CT_Modification_18-DG-11420004-274_Enhanced Oak Wilt Monitoring
- For an interim report: MFO_NJ_17-DG-11420004-284_INTERIM Accomplishment and Financial New Jersey Forest Stewardship Program
- For a final report: SPFO_WI_16-DG-11420004-206_FINAL Accomplishment and Financial Volunteer Fire Assistance Core Funding

For Consolidated Payment Grants (CPGs): Progress reports may be one multiple-page report that covers each program but is separated out and clearly identifies goals and accomplishments for that year. This is acceptable and preferable because it consolidates the paperwork not only for the State but also for Forest Service review and processing. The SF425 should be a consolidation of the funding in total and not individual SF425 forms for each core program funding line. One page that reflects the entire award is acceptable and preferable, again for both your processing and our review. **As of April 2020, multiple SF425s will be rejected and returned for consolidation to one page.**