

## **FY 2019 Landscape Scale Restoration Request for Applications: Reviewers' Comments**

### **1. Application #12726368–MI**

#### **Little Bridges of Michigan Counties**

- BMPs are already in place; why are mats funded by the state needed if they are required by loggers in wet situations? It might be more practical to find out what the BMP compliance level is and target those areas that are low in compliance.
- Tech transfer could be improved a bit, but overall a great proposal.
- Nice project, well-written proposal.

### **2. Application #12728290–MD**

#### **Adapting Mid-Atlantic Reservoir Forests for Climate Change**

- This project is looking at priority areas and focusing on creating working plans to adapt for a changing climate. The program outcomes seem repeatable and shareable for other areas to inform their own decisionmaking possibilities and future planning. There are multiple partners who are directly affected by this project and seem to have dedication to the cause.
- Great job discussing desired future condition and outcomes, but needs a timeline of the methods used to reach the outcomes.
- Incentives plan – okay/within authorities? Incentives plan needs better elaboration/description.
- Clear focused goals and objectives. Drinking water reservoirs, adapt to climate change. Wildland-urban interface. Solid plans for local buy in. 1:1 match. Multiple fiscal partners.

### **3. Application #12725517–CT**

#### **The Connecticut Master Woodland Owner Program: A New Model for Engaging Landowners**

- Define your acronyms the first time used (e.g., what is CLEAR or DEEP?). Not sure how you measure forest areas managed sustainably: new acres with a new plan? Or will landowners already with a plan on their forest acres be counted also? Your target audience may already include engaged landowners.
- Like project; would fund on overview.
- Unclear on how conservation and protection acreage was claimed. The assumption is that the graduates are going to immediately treat private land.
- Expanding use of successful outreach strategies that range from in-person contacts to web-based media. Outreach/training engages partners, landowners, volunteers, institutional knowledge. 1:1.6 cost share. Fiscal partners.

**4. Application #12726942–VT**

**The Stories of Vermont's Forests: Harnessing the Power of Storytelling to Drive Impact**

- This project seems a little weak in its approach and does not specifically outline how the outreach will be used to strengthen the program deliverables to constituents other than formulating information on who and what the programs deliver. I would have liked to see how these communications will improve specific program outcomes and goals.
- Excellent topic; we need more outlets to message forestry like this proposal.
- Hoorah! Super creativity!! Thoughtfully crafted proposal. Unique approach to addressing a challenge all natural professionals face.

**5. Application #12726784–MN**

**Our Dynamic Forests: 4D Canopy Volume and Other Important Metrics for Modern Forest Management**

- Appears to be a worthwhile project in that the outcome would be beneficial, but I am not sure State & Private Forestry funds should be used for a university research project (90% of the funding). How often, and at what cost, will data need updating? Wouldn't this concept be more appropriately addressed by the research arm of the U.S. Forest Service? How practical, monetarily speaking, would it be for other states to adopt?
- Great project, but I would like to see a clear timeline of the methods used to accomplish the measurable results.
- Interpret digital stereo pairs. Knowledgeable partners. Proposal identifies multiple uses that will give insight into operational questions related to value to forest management and long-term cost effectiveness. 1:1.5 cost share. What is PETASCALE computing?

**6. Application #12728712–IL**

**Assuring Self-Sufficiency in Forest Restoration at the Public/Private Interface**

- Budget is confusing: \$245,664 in Federal funds for SIPBA, \$78,000 for River to River CWMA, and \$48,000 for FRST adds up (\$371,664) to more than the grant request of \$317,500. If the 6,000-acre goal is met in 2 years, this would be a very cost-effective program (approximately \$53/acre treated). It appears that the organizations involved have the experience to attain the proposed on-the-ground outcomes.
- Lacks detail about what invasives will be targeted and why. Also needs a better explanation of burn objectives for improving forest habitat.
- Budget narrative not all that clear.

**7. Application #12728817–WI**

**PlayCleanGo Outreach Campaign Expansion**

- Appears to be a well-established and recognizable program that potentially can have enormous benefits on the landscape if a high percentage of recreationalists thoroughly follow the guidelines. But the question remains, what percentage of recreationalists (even in a specific area) are adhering to the guidelines, and how can success be measured (and, for that matter, has it ever been measured)?
- Confusing project but great topic and need.

**8. Application #12728508–MA**

**Increasing Resiliency in Southern New England Oak Forests**

- I like the concept, but the project lacks significant on-the-ground measureables. It's also unclear how some of the measureables will be accomplished.
- Fills a significant need. Well-crafted proposal. Plays an important convening/organizing role.

**9. Application #12727435–MA**

**Planting Trees for Improved Community Health in Two Small, Low-Income Cities in Massachusetts**

- The inclusion of the healthcare providers is wonderful to see. I wish there was more information on the location identification, as well as the larger community engagement portion of the project other than the fact that the communities were chosen because of their low canopy. I did not notice any information on local outreach or workshops.
- The project is simple and replicable, but does not clearly articulate how it addresses priorities in the State Forest Action Plan.
- Almost all match comes from the trees – very little community contribution. Only the most tenuous connection made to the State Forest Action Plan.
- Link to human health makes this a high-visibility project in this low-income area. Targets based on research on numbers of trees needed to reduce incidents of asthma in communities. Health partners will use existing networks to promote urban tree planting. Clark University will monitor air quality over the long term. 1:1.17 cost share. Can't use Federal money for food.

**10. Application #12727498–MD**

**Increasing the Pace and Impact of Forest Restoration in the Potomac Headwaters Landscape**

- This project seems well thought out and has simple, measurable goals that will make a marked difference and can demonstrate forest management practices that provide a positive outcome. The multistate and multilandowner aspect is also a positive.
- Not clear on the timeline of activities over the 3-year grant period. No budget details on the \$195,000 (79% of the grant) contractual expenses. High level of collaboration increases the multiplier effect of project goals and outcomes.
- Cross-state project with The Nature Conservancy and use of prescribed fire. Very small-scale application of prescribed fire. Data available online?
- Missing problem statement. Most of the Issue info is found in the Collaboration section. Eleven-county area, two states' partners, Fish & Wildlife Service, USDA Forest Service National Forest System, Natural Resources Conservation Service, National Park Service. Why not show deliverables in Goal 1 and 3 (engage people in stewardship considering that landowners will be implementing Forest Stewardship Plans)? Mostly private land, some state. Addresses hazardous fuels reduction as well as restoration. Would be good if we could require National Fire Plan Operations and Reporting System inclusion in the application.

**11. Application #12728708–IL**

**Let the Sun Shine In! Landscape Oak System Restoration by way of Forest Stewardship Clusters**

- Great example of Shared Stewardship.
- 1:1 match. Local organizations are active and supportive.

**12. Application #12728437–OH**

**Longitudinal Assessment of Urban Tree Canopy following Emerald Ash Borer**

- Needs a better timeline for measurable outcomes.

**13. Application #12726750–MN**

**Community Tree Canopy Assessment: They Can't Manage What We Don't Measure**

- This project looks like it will be taking a holistic approach in understanding its forest canopy. Incorporating the Firewise program and other non-urban staff and program resources is a good way to stretch this data and put it to more use.
- Looks like a solid mapping tool for canopy analysis.
- State heavily invested; data being made easily available to the public is important!!!
- Trying to tie to climate change; a novel approach, but not sure amount of carbon sequestered compares well to larger forest blocks.

**14. Application #12726797–PA**

**Southern Laurel Highlands Plant & Pest Management Partnership: Growing, Teaching, Acting: Non-Native Invasive Species Partnerships for Forest Health**

- Good explanation of budget, but it would be good to also include a timeline of the methods used to accomplish the measurable results.
- Nice proposal with clear objective.
- Multiple resource protection. Clarity in partner roles. Targeted, high-visibility project areas. Taps into institutional activities and identifies accomplishments specific to this grant. Educational value and outreach will continue after projects are completed. 1:1.06 match.

**15. Application #12727923–WI**

**Bringing Sustainable Forestry Outreach into the 21st Century: Testing New Methods and Digital Outreach Strategies to Connect with the Increase of Women Forestland Owners**

- I like the idea of bringing outreach into the 21st century, but missed the information as to how technology and women landowners are at odds? I did not see any information listed at getting to the core of woman-owned property and the lack of engagement. The focus group is a good step, but I get a sense of dual outcomes: engaging woman landowners and using new tech to engage, with neither digging deep enough.
- Interesting project; uncertain of the on-the-ground impacts.

**16. Application #12726946–VT**

**Community Forests as Models of Stewardship**

- This project description has a good history and follow through on activity that identified this area as a state and region priority. One thing that I saw lacking was the use of existing project data to specifically call out positive and negative outcomes. There is a history with those existing projects that can tell a compelling story, and I would like to see those existing projects act as the catalyst for these new projects.
- This proposal addresses some very pertinent topics in community forestry.
- Budget difficult to follow.

**17. Application #12727654–MI**

**Threefold Restoration on Boardman River Bottomlands Post Dams Removals**

- Nice restoration effort.
- Project is fairly expensive for the number of acres being treated.
- Final dam removal draws attention to the watershed. Timeliness is a key opportunity supporting this project.

**18. Application #12727891–NJ**

**Rehabilitating New Jersey's Pest-Plagued Forests**

- Well-organized/written proposal. Well-stated problem/issue. Not clear what species or size(s) are being used for planting. No reference to planting guidelines; no deliverables or budget listed for planting, so question whether this will be done. Expensive prescribed fire.

**19. Application #12726602–MI**

**NO MARKETS, NO MANAGEMENT: A Multi-State Project to Maintain Working Forests through Sustainable Management and Markets for Forest Products**

- I would have liked to see more landowner collaboration in the project. Without landowner willingness and education, the industry will be without these products. Six workshops across 13 states seems too few – would like to have seen at least one per state.
- This project lacks significant measurable outcomes and needs to more clearly articulate the methods used to achieve the outcomes.
- Meetings and workshops on this issue exist.
- Projects they would complete are very good; fills a significant need. However, they have to get at some means of conveying measures/outcomes even if it is with comparisons to past projects, etc. Need to get personalized letters of recommendation.

**20. Application #12726999–NY**

**Expand the Gowanus Tree Network to Build a Sustainable Urban Forest**

- Good attempt at dealing with a challenging issue.
- At \$765K (Federal plus match), the cost benefit is not compelling. A 400-acre Stewardship Plan was mentioned once in the results – with no description or further information.
- Problem statement and purpose. A bit expensive for the tangible deliverables.

**21. Application #12726826–IA**

**Hazardous Fuels Management in Iowa's Loess Hills Eco-Region**

- Public meetings and field days are good ideas and worthwhile. However, the budget seems overly high for the main outcome, which is a 50-acre demonstration area. One thousand six hundred acres of public area to be maintained with prescribed fire, but who will do this work and what will the cost be? Not clear from the application.
- The intent is to train landowners to do burning on their own?

**22. Application #12726833–IA**

**Reaching the Unengaged: A New Approach to Outreach to Increase Active Woodland Management in Southeast and South Central Iowa**

- I like the new approach to reaching out and engaging unengaged landowners.
- Project has worthy outcomes, but the value proposition (impact/\$) is challenging.

**23. Application #12727400–WI**

**Engaging Landowners and Supporting Action using Landscape Scale Forest and Wildlife Habitat Management in Central Wisconsin**

- This project seems well laid out and touches on many partners to create a succinct project and create positive change while engaging new constituents.
- I like the concept of working beyond borders to consider the bigger picture.
- Funding is for administrative positions.
- Expand number of woodland cooperatives targeting small woodland landowners. Taps into existing institutions with diverse landowner contacts.

**24. Application #12726550–CT**

**A Shared Messaging Campaign to Promote Forest Management and Land Protection for Source Waters on Municipal and Private Forest Land in States' Priority Landscapes**

- The project is heavy on messaging, but seems to lack measurable results. It would be good to include a better explanation and timeline for accomplishing results on the ground.
- Four-state messaging campaign. Identification of priority landscapes. Lacks threat description.

**25. Application #12728517–ME**

**Mapping, Prioritizing, and Controlling Invasive Plants in Maine Woodlands**

- Large budget ask, complicated match; not sure how measureables are quantified.
- Like this project – needed – would want to fund.
- Which invasive species? How will they be treated? How do we know those methods are effective? Where will the landscape plan be done and what area will it cover? Insufficient information is provided on how the incentives plan will work. Is the incentives piece within authorities?
- Minimal problem statement. More comprehensive approach than typical, leading to greater sustainability. Missing Forest Health Protection form.

**26. Application #12726948–VT**

**Vermont's Coordinated Response to EAB**

- Okay project, but with nationwide EAB spread, this should have been looked at years ago.
- A large portion of the funding (60%) will essentially support a forest health specialist position for 3 years. No mention of why the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation cannot do the work with existing personnel. No detailed budget. This forest pest control/tree removal project seems to be better suited as a regular responsibility of the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation rather than LSR funding.
- Well-written proposal!
- State Forester's priority #1 (VT).

**27. Application #12727854–MA/RI**

**Proposal to Create Regional Urban Forestry Education and Advocacy Institute in Southern New England**

- This project looks to engage and support local non-professionals in understanding and appreciating the urban forest around them. I would have liked to see more information on the TEA curriculum and possible collaboration with local Tree Wardens or existing Tree Steward courses that are offered.
- More focus for on-the-ground projects versus another organizational infrastructure.
- Two states, six nongovernmental organizations, one university. Would be stronger with a clear problem statement (the letters of support best address it). Question about the eligibility of match contributed for research. Overmatched (60%), so may not be a problem. Nice detail in budget narrative. Unclear what the maintenance plan is for the planted trees. Hard to distinguish between "monitoring," "stewardship," "tending," and maintenance of new plantings. What size trees will be planted? Coordinated with USDA Forest Service Resource Conservation & Development. Great letters of support.

**28. Application #12728062–VT**

**Healthy Forests, Healthy Waters Initiative: Innovative Approach to Promoting Water Quality through Watershed Forestry**

- Riparian buffers are exceedingly important in watersheds that are impaired or have high nutrient loading, and the outreach goals of the project are admirable. However, based on the output of this project, it would take approximately 6,128 acres of riparian buffer enhancement or maintenance to reduce Lake Champlain phosphorous loading by 1%. Is this even practical or significant?
- High-profile project in the region.
- Good Problem Statement. Collaboration narrative not provided; some brief reference in Leverage section. No letters of support. Supplement 1 for amount requested (\$15K) does not match budget sheet.

**29. Application #12727969–PA**

**Pennsylvania Lawn Conversion Program**

- Like project; would fund on overview.

**30. Application #12726839–IA**

**Healthy Urban Forests: Master Planning for Watershed Improvement**

- How are the 3,200 landscape-sized (not sure what this means) trees being funded? No mention in the application. How, specifically, will 1,328,000 acres of high-priority forest ecosystems and landscapes be protected from conversion by this project? No mention of regulations or laws proposed.
- Like project; would fund on overview.
- Acres conserved/protected/enhanced are overstated for a project with project output of 2 workshops and 48 meetings.

**31. Application #12728572–IN**

**Southern Indiana Invasives Strike Team**

- The project seems worthwhile; however, there seems to be much more planning needed to get the project rolling. Locations, species identified, mapping, follow-up, outreach, tying into larger plans – all seem in the infancy stage of planning.
- This project needs to more clearly articulate how this work relates to the State Forest Action Plan. Also needs a better explanation of how the measurable results will help reach a desired future condition.
- Major partner investment, high-priority natural resource objective. Strike team could be trained and used for prescribed fire to help control invasives and restore ecosystems across boundaries.
- Mention of past work. What did they learn from that? Results of those efforts? Unsatisfying level of detail re: budgets.

**32. Application #12727632–WI**

**Restoration of Prevalent Natural Communities Found Within the Northern Lake Michigan Coastal Ecological Landscape**

- Small but important and valuable project.
- This project needs to show more measurable outcomes. It needs to articulate how these outcomes protect forests from threats and conserve or manage working landscapes.
- Ecologically important area with many partners, small-scale/intensive treatment of landscape.
- Is pavilion construction allowed as match? If not, they need to find replacement match to meet the 1:1.4 demo site that would be representative across a larger ecoregion. Centralized county invasive database. Inventories and treatment data mapped and publically available.

**33. Application #12728814–DC**

**Carbon Finance for Smaller Landowners & Priority Forests in the Delaware River Basin**

- Large amount of budget for relatively small target acreage.
- Budget presentation very challenging to follow. Appears to be missing at least one project proposal supplement: Partner Budget.
- Problems statement and priority area identified. Good description of linkage to State Forest Action Plan. Forward thinking. Adding a custom measure for the Guide would have increased Measurable Results score and tech transfer. Can value of donated easement be used as match??

**34. Application #12728190–MI**

**Grand River Watershed Urban Forest Restoration Project**

- Small target area for a large budget.
- Three priority sites in an Urban Waters Partnership Area. Multisource goals, including water filtration and connectivity among areas with low amounts of tree cover. Invasives removal. 1:1 cost share. Building local capacity and social license to do work in these areas with outreach using "neighborhood forester program."

**35. Application #12726823–IA**

**Adaptive Silviculture for Resilient Forests in Iowa's Driftless Eco-Region**

- Demonstrating adaptation approaches will involve invasive species removal, regeneration harvest, and planting. What is new here? In the short grant time frame (3 years), how will the planted species chosen demonstrate projected suitability to future (20/30/50 years from now?) climate conditions? Training workshops are a great way to encourage forest landowner participation in active forest management.
- Like project – needed – would want to fund.
- Good project; need to see more on-the-ground treatment.
- Incorporating climate science into management today.

**36. Application #12727521–NY**

**Aligning Forest Restoration Efforts of Non-Profit and Municipal Land Managers Across the Urban Landscape**

- Essentially, 76% of the funding (\$161,550) is for salaries for three NAC personnel, and the outcome will be evaluations/recommendations. It is not clear if the \$200,000 match by NYC Parks in contractual services will be for on-the-ground outcomes directly related to NAC contractual expenses. Also, what specifically is involved with the proposed matching contractual expenses?
- Institutional structures, technical tools, and data-sharing objectives are in place to leverage local groups and increase citizen participation over the long term. Clear accomplishments and roles for partners. Form 424 numbers do not match 424B numbers. 424B = 1.04 match.

**37. Application #12725393–NH**

**Better Northeast Silviculture through Timber Markets Retention and New Market Recruitment Initiative**

- Large-scale project that might be better suited for state economic development departments rather than a private consulting firm (receiving 87% of the funding). A lot of money for a project that "may not see tangible results until after the 3-year project concludes."
- Like project; would fund on overview.
- Why is the Wood Education and Resource Center not involved? For the amount of money requested, I would expect much more detail.
- Follow on to FY 2016 grant. Pretty comprehensive plan. In addition to seven State Forester endorsements, supported by the White Mountain National Forest (aka Shared Stewardship).

**38. Application #12728537–OH**

**Urban Forestry Apprenticeship Program**

- LSR does not seem to be the right venue for this application.
- Excellent project but poorly written grant – would fund.
- The concept – we need foresters, investing in people for our future – is smart. Partner match is modest; if willing/able, we should give them basic firefighter training/experience.
- Good problem statement. What is the grounding for expecting match of \$75K from communities? No community letters of support. Tech transfer (i.e. replication of model) not addressed.

**39. Application #12727374–MI**

**Optimizing Water Quality Benefits in the Lower Grand River Watershed through Targeted Community Forestry Assistance**

- This project seems like a great way to come to a community and discuss the importance of trees and increased tree canopy in slowing stormwater, and the power of trees and infiltration. However, I did not see anything in the proposal that discussed details relating to Best Management Practices (BMPs). I would like to see some new technology used as a basis for demonstration areas or further discussions on the inclusion of trees in traditional green infrastructure.

**40. Application #12728594–OH**

**Influencing the Screentime Generation**

- This grant application is lacking detail in the 5 Ws (Who, What, When, Where, Why) and How. It is hard to rank this grant with little information.
- Good idea – good project with potential at a national level (would be good pilot).
- Innovative national effort to target the digital information population. 1:1 cost share. Arbor Day tree cities, tree campuses, Line USA target audiences.

**41. Application #12727916–NJ**

**Establish the New Jersey Heritage Tree Conservation Education Program**

- This seems like a "feel good" project. I did not see how this project clearly addresses any priority issues as identified in the State Forest Action Plan.
- Equipment justification required. Statewide project. Mix of big tree and heritage tree advocacy. Description of partner target accomplishments and interaction between partners and marketing consultant would strengthen this application.

**42. Application #12728239–OH**

**Invasive Plant Strike Teams: Improving the Health of Priority Forest Landscapes**

- Invasive control is important to forest health, and this project is clear on its objective. However, I do not see any continued monitoring for the control BMPs or engagement apart from hiring crews to solve a known issue. I would have liked to see more long-term monitoring or various options in similar situations to catalog the best outcome versus resource allocation.
- It is unclear in the budget how the matched salaries/fringe benefits will be used directly for this project. In the narrative it states that the two strike teams will conduct invasive species control on 2,000 acres, and that is also the projected on-the-ground outcome. So what is the \$170,200 match providing the project? Is 2 acres/day/strike team (not counting survey, poor weather, and training days) average realistic?
- Evaluator recuses.