



Eastern Region State and Private Forestry Fiscal Year 2021 Landscape Scale Restoration Competitive Process Request for Applications with Guidance and Instructions

Clickable Table of Contents

Submission Dates for Fiscal Year (FY) 2021	1
Purpose of the Landscape Scale Restoration Competitive Process.....	1
Key Points.....	2
Eligibility.....	3
Criteria for Landscape Scale Restoration Project Selection (100 points total).....	5
Preparing and Submitting an Application for this Funding Opportunity.....	6
Project Selection	8
Contacts for Further Information	9
Appendix I. Instructions for Submitting Applications through Grants.gov.....	10
Appendix II. Additional Guidelines for Forest Health Treatment Projects	13
Appendix III. Landscape Scale Restoration Application Requirements Checklist.....	14

Submission Dates for Fiscal Year (FY) 2021

-
- **Submit all applications through [Grants.gov](https://www.Grants.gov) by 6 p.m. Eastern, September 17, 2020.** Search for grant Opportunity Number **USDA-FS-2021-LSR**. See [Appendix I](#) for Grants.gov instructions.
 - All applications submitted, except those by Tribes, must have a State Forester sponsor. For applications developed by collaborators with State forestry agencies: Submit a draft of your application narrative to the relevant State Forester(s) by COB **August 20, 2020**. The State Forester sponsor(s) must submit their support letter to the applicant in time for the applicant to upload to [Grants.gov](https://www.Grants.gov) by 6 p.m. Eastern, **September 17, 2020**.

Purpose of the Landscape Scale Restoration Competitive Process

The purpose of the State and Private Forestry Landscape Scale Restoration (LSR) Program, as cited in Section 13A of the [Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act](#), is: **“To encourage collaborative, science-based restoration of priority forest landscapes.”** This regional guidance and process aligns with the [FY 2021 LSR Competitive Process National Guidance](#). As noted in the national guidance, this competitive process is intended to support high-impact projects that promote collaborative, science-based restoration of priority forest landscapes, leverage public and private resources, and that further priorities identified in each [State’s Forest Action Plan](#) or equivalent restoration strategy. The project scale shall be a function of the most appropriate size associated with the issue or landscape of priority importance and may result in single, multistate, or cross-regional implementation.

Proposed projects should address priority issues and landscapes, produce measurable on-the-ground outcomes, involve collaboration with partners that results in added value, and cross boundaries on any combination of land ownerships. LSR funds must be spent on non-Federal lands as appropriate using State and Private Forestry (S&PF) authorities ([see Eligibility section](#)). Matching funds must be derived entirely from non-Federal sources.



Key Points

- **Who Can Apply:** State forestry or an equivalent State agency, units of local government, Tribes, non-profit organizations (defined as a 501c3), and universities are eligible to submit applications. For-profit entities are not eligible to apply under this competition.
- **State Forester Sponsorship:** All applications submitted, except those submitted by Tribes, must have a State Forester sponsor. Each State Forester may sponsor no more than 5 applications (single, multistate, or cross-regional); however, applications with 11 or more State Forester sponsors and applications submitted by Tribes do not count against this limit of 5 applications per State.
- **On-the-Ground Outcomes on Rural Lands:** Projects must achieve on-the-ground outcomes on rural, nonindustrial private forest land and/or rural State or local government forest land.¹ For the purposes of this program, “rural” means any area other than an urbanized area such as a city or town that has a population of greater than 50,000 inhabitants according to the latest census. You may use the [LSR Project Planning Tool \(Project Eligibility Tab\)](#) to confirm if a city or town is rural according to this definition. Projects proposed through this process may extend or expand upon other work supported by Federal funds; however, activities and accomplishments must be tracked and reported separately. Note: While projects may include a component of outreach, education, and/or training as a means to achieve the project goals, it should not be the sole outcome.
- **Minimum and Maximum Funding Levels:** The minimum Federal funding per project is \$25,000. The maximum amount of Federal funding awarded to any one State (State cap) or Tribe via this competitive process is 15% of the total available. As in past years, for FY 2021, funds available to the Eastern Region are based on the final fiscal year appropriation from Congress for the LSR Program and the funding allocation to the Region from the Agency’s Washington Office. While the funding level may fluctuate from year to year, for planning purposes, the R9 Federal funding for LSR projects has been approximately \$4 million annually. The maximum Federal funding for a multistate or cross-regional project is \$600,000.
- **Required Matching Funds of 1:1:** The match must be met by eligible and allowable costs and is subject to match provisions in grant regulations ([Code of Federal Regulations Title 2 Part 200.306](#) and [Subpart E for Cost Principles](#)). Match must meet all the same requirements as the Federal share and be documented sufficiently to support financial tracking and accountability. See the [Matching Funds document](#) for more guidance.
- **Lead Agency or Organization:** All applications must identify the lead agency or organization that will have primary responsibility for coordinating project work and reporting. The lead agency may pass funds to other partners performing work as relevant (this is preferred when funding will go to multiple agencies/organizations). If funds are to go directly from the Forest Service to multiple agencies (not passed through by the lead), for this Request for Applications (RFA), the lead agency must submit a preliminary SF-424 and SF-424A that includes all Federal funds requested and matching contributions (for the whole project) and list each partner in a separate column in the [Budget Spreadsheet](#). If the project is selected for funding, at that time each direct recipient will submit a new SF-424, SF-424A, and narrative for their portion of the project. All direct funds recipients are responsible for fiscal and performance reporting.
- **Grant Timeframes:** Projects will be fully funded to the extent possible once the final Eastern Region S&PF FY 2021 budget is received (ranging from April to July in past years). Projects should be completed within 3 years, i.e., FY 2021 projects awarded in spring of 2021 would be completed by September 30, 2024.

¹ Federal funding and 1:1 match will be spent on non-Federal lands that are:

- Nonindustrial private forest land that is rural; has existing tree cover or is suitable for growing trees; and is owned by any private individual, group, association, corporation, Indian tribe, or other private legal entity; and/or
- State forest land that is rural, under State or local governmental ownership, and considered to be non-Federal forest land.

- **For Multistate and Cross-Regional Projects:** Collaborative projects that involve multiple partners must include letters of concurrence from each fiscal partner and all affected State Foresters. Multistate projects remain eligible for funding unless all cooperating States would exceed their individual caps. A multistate or cross-regional project shall not exceed \$600,000 of Federal share. Multistate project applications must clearly delineate each State’s share in the Budget Spreadsheet or Project Description (the allocation against each State funding cap need not directly link to contributions by partners). Cross-regional projects are scored and ranked through one of the regional processes (Northeast and Midwest, West, or South). The State Forester regional organizations and Forest Service Regions collaborate during the evaluation process.

Note: State caps can be exceeded in a multistate project if at least one partner State would not exceed its individual cap. This provision removes a previous disincentive to pursue multistate projects.

- **Reporting:** In addition to the standard annual reporting requirements associated with all U.S. Forest Service grants to States and partners, funded LSR projects are required to provide annual project performance and spatial data through the Landscape Scale Restoration database (LaSR) no later than October 28 each year. This requires both Forest Service grant monitors and LSR grant recipients to coordinate in entering project information. If an LSR grant recipient is new to this reporting process, they will need to sign up for an account to access the LaSR module. The assigned Forest Service grant monitor can assist you with this.

Eligibility

State forestry agencies are eligible to submit or sponsor applications for this LSR process. Nonprofit organizations (501c3), universities, and units of local government must submit a draft of the Application Narrative Form and Budget Spreadsheet to the State Forester(s) in the State(s) where the activity will be conducted for their sponsorship. State Forester contact information is available on the [National Association of State Foresters website](#). State Foresters will collaborate with State agriculture agency directors or other organization directors with State forest health program responsibilities. At least one State Forester sponsor is required for each application, except those submitted by Tribes. Tribes may submit applications directly to [Grants.gov](#). Tribes are encouraged to coordinate with the State. S&PF is also available to facilitate and assist with this coordination, can provide liaison support for Tribes, and can assist with application submission if needed. See the [“Preparing and Submitting an Application” section](#) of this document for more instructions. For-profit organizations are not eligible to submit applications under this competition.

State Forester letters of support are submitted in one of two categories:

- **State Forester Sponsor:** This level of support is required if any of the following apply:
 - The State government unit is a recipient of Federal funds.
 - The State government unit is supplying match in any form.
 - The project is expected to generate deliverables within the State.

Each State Forester may sponsor no more than 5 applications (single, multistate, or cross-regional); however, applications with 11 or more State Forester sponsors and applications submitted by Tribes do not count against this limit of 5 applications per State.

- **State Forester Endorsement:** This level of support does not count against the 5 application/State limit. Use this level of support if there is no significant direct State involvement (State cannot be a direct recipient or provide match, and work does not generate deliverables to the endorsing State).

Eligible Authorities and Project Types for LSR

Projects must conform to laws and authorities in the [Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act](#).

Allowable authorities for LSR: Forest Stewardship, Rural Forestry Assistance, Urban and Community Forestry, Forest Health Protection, and Community and Private Land Fire Assistance (State Fire Assistance). The authorities for this RFA may be used singly or in combination.

Ineligible authorities for LSR: Rural Volunteer Fire Department Assistance, Forest Legacy, Community Forest and Open Space, and Federal Lands Forest Health Management.

Examples of Eligible Projects

- Water quality and watershed health improvement.
- Wildlife habitat improvement.
- Demonstration projects that both achieve on-the-ground accomplishments for a specific area and also provide sites for conservation education and tech transfer.
- Ecosystem services projects.
- Community tree planting projects in communities with a population of less than 50,000.²
- Strategic outreach efforts to land managers/owners facing threats from urban sprawl, invasive species, and wildfire, and complementary efforts to improve rural prosperity, as long as the project includes on-the-ground outcomes as well.
- Cross-boundary fuels management projects that are adjacent to National Forest System lands.
- Integrated efforts to improve management of nonindustrial private forest lands according to the State's Forest Action Plan.
- Survey, prioritization, and treatment to control invasive plants in a high-priority landscape.
- Reducing risk in the wildland-urban interface to protect high-value assets such as drinking water and community infrastructure.
- Prevention and preparedness projects in advance of known invasive pests, with on-the-ground outcomes.
- Fuels management projects.
- Restoration of forests following damaging events to promote desired future conditions.
- Special surveys and technical assistance for forest health issues that exceed the resources available through core Forest Health Program (FHP) funding. Applications must clearly show how and why the proposed activities complement the core FHP program in the State and must include on-the-ground outcomes.
- Activities to better engage the public in forest health work to achieve on-the-ground outcomes.

Important Notes:

- For Forest Health projects: Applicants are encouraged to contact the [Eastern Region S&PF Forest Health Program specialists](#) for assistance and additional information.
- If an application includes forest health treatment: You are required to attach a completed [Cooperative Lands Forest Pest Treatment Funding Request](#) to the application at submission. Also refer to [Appendix II](#).
- If an application involves Forest Fire Hazard Mitigation activities: You are required to attach a completed [National Fire Plan Operations and Reporting System \(NFPORS\) Form](#) to the application package at the time of submission.
- Fuels management projects adjacent to National Forests may be eligible for additional funding sources. Please consult with Maris Gabliks (maris.g.gabliks@usda.gov or 609-235-7524), Eastern Region S&PF, Acting Deputy Director of Fire and Aviation, prior to submission to ensure all funding opportunities are explored.

Projects Excluded from Consideration under this RFA

- Due to the national requirement for LSR projects to focus on rural forest land, projects only in cities or towns with greater than 50,000 inhabitants are not eligible under this program (refer to the [LSR Project Planning Tool \(Project Eligibility Tab\)](#)).
- National and cross-regional forest health initiatives: Early Detection/Rapid Response (EDRR), Evaluation Monitoring, Forest Service Pesticide Impact Assessment Program, Hemlock Woolly Adelgid Methods, and Special Technology Development Projects. These are run through separate national processes. Note: The EDRR exclusion does not apply to plants.
- Forest health technology development and methods improvement projects, which are solicited separately.
- Purchase of fire department equipment, including fire weather stations and dry fire hydrants.
- Small business start-up funding.
- Research and development projects. However, technical transfer, education, and outreach activities

² Conform to [Tree Planting Guidelines](#), which address accepted techniques for tree planting and maintenance. The number of trees to be planted, size of trees, and general description of the planting should be included in the application.

associated with research can be included in the application, and a research entity can be included as a partner with its contribution leveraged in the larger project (not funded with the LSR Federal dollars or associated match).

- Construction and capital improvements (facilities and infrastructure). However, capital improvements may be listed as enhanced leverage (not part of the S&PF Federal funding or match).
- Forest Legacy Program and Community Forest and Open Space projects.
- Gypsy moth suppression, eradication, and Slow-the-Spread (STS) projects. These are determined by cooperative surveys or other efforts in cooperation with the STS Foundation.
- Cost-share, reimbursement, and other types of payment directly to private landowners is not allowed; however, LSR funding (and match) may be used to perform work on private lands.
- While projects may include a component of outreach, education, and/or training as a means to achieve the project goals, outreach and education should not be the sole outcome.

Criteria for Landscape Scale Restoration Project Selection (100 points total)

1. Priority Issues and/or Landscapes in the State Forest Action Plan(s) (25 points)

Projects will be based on an analysis within the State or region that identifies the issue or landscape being addressed as a priority in the State Forest Action Plan(s) or equivalent restoration strategy. Considering that State Forest Action Plans are being revised in 2020 (for all States except Vermont, which completed a full revision in 2017), either the last final plan as posted on the [State Forest Action Plan website](#) (2010 for most States) or the new plan (e.g., in final draft form) can be referenced. If the 2020 plan is close to final or has been submitted to the Forest Service for approval, reference to the 2020 plan is encouraged (as long as a draft of that plan is available to reference). Applicants should check with the State Forester to verify which plan to use.

- Demonstrate focus on a significant issue and/or priority landscape in the respective State Forest Action Plan(s).
- Describe how the project will bring a State or region to a desired future condition, goal, or strategy as articulated in the respective State Forest Action Plan(s).

2. Measurable Outcomes on the Ground (35 points)

- Describe how reaching the goals and achievements of the project will influence positive change.
- Projects shall prioritize funding and other resources toward one or more of the national LSR objectives:
 - Reduce the risk of uncharacteristic wildfires.
 - Improve fish and wildlife habitats, including for threatened and endangered species.
 - Maintain or improve water quality and watershed function.
 - Mitigate invasive species, insect infestation, and disease.
 - Improve important forest ecosystems.
 - Measure ecological and economic benefits, including air quality and soil quality and productivity.
- Include specific measurable results that show how the Federal investment will lead to outcomes on the landscape, e.g., acres treated for insects or invasive plants, number of trees planted to enhance water quality, acres of seedlings planted or forest treated to improve wildlife habitat, and acres treated to reduce hazardous fuels. The measures/metrics should be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and timely. Less quantifiable return on investments may be described in the narrative section. Reviewers will assess if outcomes are commensurate with the budget.

3. Collaboration and Integrated Delivery (20 points)

- Identify partners that have demonstrated a commitment and add value towards planning and carrying out the project, and describe what these partners contribute.
- Seek to improve the delivery of public benefits from forest management by coordinating with complementary State and Federal programs and partnership efforts when possible (e.g., Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program, landscape areas designated for insect and disease treatments,

Good Neighbor Authority, stewardship contracting projects, Natural Resources Conservation Service programs, Shared Stewardship agreements, and appropriate state-level programs).

- Describe cross-boundary goals, which can include a combination of Tribal, State, local government, and private land ownerships (e.g., multiple private landowners, private and State landowners, State and Federal landowners, State and local government, State and Tribal landowners, etc.).
- Demonstrate residual positive benefits, as a result of collaboration, related to capacity, skills, knowledge, infrastructure, or a replicable approach, among others.

Collaboration may be qualitative in nature, and the contribution of the partners may be more important than the number of partners involved. Multistate collaboration and integration of projects are encouraged.

4. Leverage (10 points)

Projects should maximize S&PF funding by using it to leverage contributions from both Federal and non-Federal entities. Project applications need to clearly identify the LSR Competitive Allocation funds requested and the associated non-Federal contributions in the SF-424A and in the Budget Spreadsheet. Provide details about leveraged contributions, including match from partners and additional non-match leveraged contributions. Note: Collaboration with a for-profit Conservation Finance partner can be a powerful leverage multiplier, but this requires careful budget segregation to ensure Federal grants are not earning income.

5. Knowledge and Technical Transfer (10 points)

Technical transfer is defined as the sharing of knowledge, tools, and innovations for practical application. As specifically as possible, describe how others will learn from the work done on this project. Describe the project's potential to inform practitioners and enhance the effectiveness of similar initiatives. Knowledge and technical transfer need not necessarily be between States, but should aim to share innovation across the landscapes of importance wherever it can be utilized. Projects should include a component of outreach, training, lessons learned, or related opportunities so that carrying out the project results in skills and capability that extend beyond the life of the project itself. While projects may include a component of outreach, education, and/or training as a means to achieve the project goals, outreach and education should not be the sole outcome.

Note: Clearly articulate the methods employed, timelines, and resources needed in the “Project Description” section of the Project Application Narrative.

Preparing and Submitting an Application for this Funding Opportunity

Submit all applications for this funding opportunity through [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov). Search for grant Opportunity Number **USDA-FS-2021-LSR**. Only authorized Grants.gov Workspace representatives for the applying entity are eligible to submit applications through Grants.gov. See [Appendix I](#) for Grants.gov instructions. [Appendix III](#) provides a checklist of requirements and required forms for the application package.

Partners and collaborators must submit an initial draft of their Grants.gov application to involved State Foresters by COB **August 20, 2020**. Procedures and policies regarding how State Foresters work with partners vary from State to State, so be sure to consult your State Forester before preparing an application. Contact information for each State Forester is available on the [National Association of State Foresters website](#). The sponsoring State(s) must submit its support letter to the applicant in time for the applicant to upload to [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) by 6 p.m. Eastern, **September 17, 2020**. State Foresters may choose to submit either a [standard form letter](#) or a custom letter of support. A single letter documenting support for all applications supported by that State is also acceptable. Each State Forester may sponsor up to 5 submissions from his or her State. Applications with 11 or more State Forester sponsors and applications submitted by Tribes do not count towards the limit of 5 applications sponsored per State. If State financial involvement is negligible, a State Forester may submit a [letter of endorsement](#) for an application sponsored by another State(s).

Prior to preparing an application, carefully read this document and review the resources for application development listed on our [Landscape Scale Restoration Grants website](#). Along with other valuable information, this site provides full text of previous competitive project applications, reviewer comments, and composite rankings.

Applicants should also be familiar with the relevant [State's Forest Action Plan\(s\)](#). Since many States are revising their State Forest Action Plan this year, check with the State Forester to verify which plan to use.

*Complete application packages include the following (**complete all forms in your Workspace at Grants.gov**):*

Required Forms Available in the Grants.gov Application Package:

- SF-424 Application for Federal Assistance. Note: The Catalog of Domestic Assistance number is 10.664.
- SF-424A Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs
- USDA AD-1047 (Certification Regarding Debarment and Suspension)
- Attachments Form (must be included in the application package in order to attach additional forms below)

Other Forms Available in the Grants.gov Application Package (submit as applicable):

- SF-424B Assurances for Non-Construction Programs (required unless Certified as part of SAM registration)
- Drug-Free Workplace Certification (required): Submit either USDA AD-1049 for non-State entities or USDA AD-1052 for State Agencies.
- SF-LLL Disclosure of Lobbying Activities: Required for entities that lobby for projects requesting over \$100,000 in Federal funding.
- USDA AD-3030 Representations Regarding Felony Conviction and Tax Delinquent Status for Corporate Applicants, if applicable (applicant determines if form applies to them)

Documents Submitted using the Attachments Form in Grants.gov (attach in this order):

- [R9 LSR Project Narrative Form](#) (required)
- Maps or photos to accompany the narrative (optional)
- Letters of Support (template available for each type of support: [sponsor](#) or [endorsement](#)). All applications except those submitted by Tribes must have one State Forester sponsorship letter (or more as relevant).
- [R9 LSR Detailed Budget Spreadsheet](#) (required)
- [Cooperative Lands Forest Pest Treatment Funding Request](#): Required for projects with a Forest Health treatment component, e.g., acres treated for invasive insects, acres of invasive plants removed.
- [National Fire Plan Operations and Reporting System \(NFPORS\) Form](#): Required for wildfire risk reduction projects, e.g., acres of hazardous fuels reduction.
- [FS-1500-35](#) Certification Regarding Lobbying: Required for entities that do not lobby for projects requesting over \$100,000 in Federal funding.

Project Narrative Form Instructions

- **Project Title:** Provide a uniquely descriptive title for this project. Use this full title consistently on all submission communications and supplemental documents, including letters of support, until an official application number is assigned by the Eastern Region S&PF.
- **Project Applicant:** Enter the name of the organization applying for Federal funding.
- **Program Contact:** Enter the name and contact information for the project or program, i.e., who would be the lead for implementing the project if funded.
- **Brief Project Overview:** 5 lines of text or up to 540 characters and spaces. Provide a brief purpose statement for the project.
- **Multistate Project Status:** Check either the “yes” or “no” box. If you checked “yes”, check one of the two boxes below.
- **Cross-Regional Project Status:** Check either the “yes” or “no” box.
- **Project Description:** 46 lines of text or up to 5,000 characters and spaces with no carriage returns. Provide a comprehensive but succinct description of the proposed project that includes basic details of who is doing what, where, and why (in context of need documented elsewhere). Clearly articulate the methods employed, timelines, and resources needed. Describe the project area, land ownerships, and specific areas targeted for treatment (or how the specific areas will be identified as part of project implementation) and address the project’s suitability as the most appropriate scale of response (local, statewide, multistate, or national) to the issue being addressed. Projects should effectively address the purpose statement: “To

encourage collaborative, science-based restoration of priority forest landscapes.”

- **Priority Issues and/or Landscapes in the State Forest Action Plan (25 points):** 45 lines of text or up to 5,000 characters and spaces with no carriage returns. Refer to the [Criteria](#) in this RFA for what to address in this section.
- **LSR Objectives the Project Addresses:** Select the relevant LSR objective(s) the project addresses.
- **Measurable Outcomes (35 points):**
 - Measurable Outcomes Table: List specific measurable results (measure, output, and unit).
 - Narrative: Describe measurable outcomes in 45 lines of text or up to 5,000 characters and spaces with no carriage returns. Refer to the [Criteria](#) in this RFA for what to address in this section.
- **Collaboration and Integrated Delivery (20 Points):** 27 lines of text or up to 3,000 characters and spaces with no carriage returns. Refer to the [Criteria section](#) of this RFA for what to address in this section.
- **Leverage (10 Points):** 15 lines of text or up to 1,625 characters and spaces with no carriage returns. Refer to the [Criteria](#) in this RFA for what to address in this section.
- **Knowledge and Technical Transfer (10 points):** 15 lines of text or up to 1,625 characters and spaces with no carriage returns. Refer to the [Criteria](#) in this RFA for what to address in this section.

Budget Spreadsheet Instructions

The [Budget Spreadsheet](#) is required for all applications and replaces the Partner Budget Table form used in past years. Read the “Instructions” worksheet in the Excel spreadsheet. Note: There are columns for the applicant and 4 financial partners in the spreadsheet. You may delete or add columns if there are fewer or more financial partners, respectively. Fill out this spreadsheet first and then transfer the totals to the SF-424 A.

Letters of Support Instructions

Letters of support are of two types: [Sponsor](#) and [Endorsement](#). State Foresters must choose the type most appropriate for them. Letters of support are welcome from all partners but are required from sponsoring State Foresters. **At least one State Forester Sponsor letter must accompany each application, except applications submitted by Tribes** (for which State Forester sponsorship is optional). State Forester Sponsor letters indicate that the sponsoring State understands that their State has a significant stake in the project (i.e., will receive Federal funds, contribute match, or accrue project deliverables). Each State Forester may sponsor no more than 5 applications; however, applications with 11 or more State Forester sponsors and applications submitted by Tribes do not count against this limit. State Foresters may submit a letter of endorsement to an application sponsored by another State if their State contribution is negligible and the direct benefit accrues primarily elsewhere.

Project Selection

An LSR Competitive Allocation Review Team consisting of an equal number of State representatives and Eastern Region S&PF leaders will collaboratively review, evaluate, and prioritize project applications.

1. Applications undergo a preliminary review to ensure eligibility and verify requirements.
2. The interagency review team completes the review of applications and develops a recommended ranked list of projects.
3. The recommended list of projects is submitted to the NMSFA (Northeast–Midwest State Forester Alliance) Executive Committee for concurrence and to the Eastern Regional Forester for approval.
4. The regionally recommended projects list is submitted to the USDA Forest Service Washington Office by December 1, 2020.

Projects ranked but not funded will receive further consideration by the NMSFA Executive Committee and the Eastern Regional Forester should additional funds become available.

Contacts for Further Information

- **Eastern Region S&PF Contact for LSR:** Sherri Wormstead, 603-868-7737, sherri.j.wormstead@usda.gov
- **NMSFA Executive Director:** Ian MacFarlane, 202-526-4804, ian@northeasternforests.org
- **For New England and New York:** Durham, NH, Field Office Representative, Constance Carpenter, 603-868-7694, constance.carpenter@usda.gov
- **For Mid-Atlantic States (DC, DE, MD, NJ, OH, PA, WV):** Morgantown, WV, Field Office Representative, Joe Koloski, 304-285-1540, joseph.koloski@usda.gov
- **For Midwest States (IA, IL, IN, MI, MN, MO, WI):** St. Paul, MN, Field Office Representative, Carleen Yocum, 651-649-5276, carleen.yocum@usda.gov
- **For Tribal Entities:** Jenn Youngblood, 484-832-8006, jennifer.k.youngblood@usda.gov

Appendix I. Instructions for Submitting Applications through Grants.gov

Submit all applications for this funding opportunity through [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov). Search for grant Opportunity Number **USDA-FS-2021-LSR**. Partners and collaborators must submit an initial draft of their Grants.gov application to involved State Foresters by COB **August 20, 2020**. You can find contact information for each State Forester in the member roster available on the [National Association of State Foresters website](https://www.nasf.org). The leading State Sponsor will submit their support letter to the applicant for upload to [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) by 6 p.m. Eastern, **September 17, 2020**, which is the application deadline. The following section provides guidance on how to submit applications through Grants.gov.

Grants.gov Application Submission and Receipt Procedures

*This section provides the application submission and receipt instructions for USDA Forest Service Eastern Region State and Private Forestry program applications. Please read the following instructions carefully and completely. Grants.gov provides applicants **24/7 support** via the toll-free number 1-800-518-4726 and email at support@grants.gov. For questions related to the specific grant opportunity, contact the number listed in the application package of the grant you are applying for.*

1. Electronic Delivery

The Eastern Region S&PF is participating in the Grants.gov initiative to provide the grant community with a single site to find and apply for grant funding opportunities. All applicants are required to submit their applications online through Grants.gov.

2. How to Register to Apply through Grants.gov

- a. *Instructions:* Read the instructions below about registering to apply for Eastern Region S&PF funds. Applicants should read the registration instructions carefully and prepare the information requested before beginning the registration process. Reviewing and assembling the required information before beginning the registration process will alleviate last-minute searches for required information.

Organizations must have a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Number, active System for Award Management (SAM) registration, and a Grants.gov account to apply for grants.

Creating a Grants.gov account can be completed online in minutes, but **please NOTE: DUNS and SAM registrations may take several weeks or more to complete**. Therefore, an organization's registration should be done in sufficient time to ensure it does not impact the entity's ability to meet required application submission deadlines.

Complete organization instructions can be found on Grants.gov here:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration.html>

- 1) *Obtain a DUNS Number:* All entities applying for funding, including renewal funding, must have a DUNS Number from Dun & Bradstreet (D&B). Applicants must enter the DUNS Number in the data entry field labeled "Organizational DUNS" on the SF-424 form. For more detailed instructions for obtaining a DUNS Number, refer to:
<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration/step-1-obtain-duns-number.html>
- 2) *Register with SAM:* All organizations applying online through Grants.gov must register with the System for Award Management (SAM). Failure to register with SAM will prevent your organization from applying through Grants.gov. SAM registration must be renewed annually. For more detailed instructions for registering with SAM, refer to:
<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration/step-2-register-with-sam.html>

- 3) *Create a Grants.gov Account*: The next step is to register an account with Grants.gov. Follow the on-screen instructions or refer to the detailed instructions here:
<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration.html>
- 4) *Add a Profile to a Grants.gov Account*: A profile in Grants.gov corresponds to a single applicant organization the user represents (i.e., an applicant) or an individual applicant. If you work for or consult with multiple organizations and have a profile for each, you may log in to one Grants.gov account to access all of your grant applications. To add an organizational profile to your Grants.gov account, enter the DUNS Number for the organization in the DUNS field while adding a profile. For more detailed instructions about creating a profile on Grants.gov, refer to:
<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration/add-profile.html>
- 5) *EBiz POC Authorized Profile Roles*: After you register with Grants.gov and create an Organization Applicant Profile, the organization applicant's request for Grants.gov roles and access is sent to the EBiz POC. The EBiz POC will then log in to Grants.gov and authorize the appropriate roles, which may include the Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) role, thereby giving you permission to complete and submit applications on behalf of the organization. You will be able to submit your application online any time after you have been assigned the AOR role. For more detailed instructions about the EBiz POC authorization of profile roles, refer to:
<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration/authorize-roles.html>
- 6) *Track Role Status*: To track the status of your role request, refer to:
<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration/track-role-status.html>

- b. *Electronic Signature*: When applications are submitted through Grants.gov, the name of the organization applicant with the AOR role that submitted the application is inserted into the signature line of the application, serving as the electronic signature. The EBiz POC **must** authorize people who are able to make legally binding commitments on behalf of the organization as a user with the AOR role; **this step is often missed and it is crucial for valid and timely submissions.**

3. How to Submit an Application to Eastern Region S&PF via Grants.gov

Workspace is a shared, online environment where members of a grant team may simultaneously access and edit different webforms within an application. For each funding opportunity announcement, you can create individual instances of a workspace. **NOTE: Grants.gov applicants are required to use Workspace to apply online. Package forms must be completed in or downloaded from Workspace.**

Below is an overview of applying on Grants.gov using Workspace. For access to complete instructions on how to apply for opportunities, refer to:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/workspace-overview.html>

- a. *Create a Workspace*: Creating a workspace allows you to complete it online and route it through your organization for review before submitting.
- b. *Complete a Workspace*: Add participants to the Workspace to work on the application together, complete all the required forms online or by downloading PDF versions, and check for errors before submission. The Workspace progress bar will display the state of your application process as you apply. As you apply using Workspace, you may click the blue question mark icon near the upper-right corner of each page to access context-sensitive help.
 - 1) *Adobe Reader*: If you decide not to apply by filling out webforms, you can download individual PDF forms in Workspace. The individual PDF forms can be downloaded and saved to your local device storage, network drive(s), or external drives, then accessed through Adobe Reader.

NOTE: Visit the Adobe Software Compatibility page on Grants.gov to download the appropriate version of the software at: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/adobe-software-compatibility.html>

- 2) *Mandatory Fields in Forms:* In the forms, you will note fields marked with an asterisk and a different background color. These fields are mandatory fields that must be completed to successfully submit your application.
 - 3) *Complete SF-424 Fields First:* The forms are designed to fill in common required fields across other forms, such as the applicant name, address, and DUNS Number. Once it is completed, the information will transfer to the other forms.
- c. *Submit a Workspace:* An application may be submitted through Workspace by clicking the Sign and Submit button on the Manage Workspace page, under the Forms tab. Grants.gov recommends submitting your application package at least 24-48 hours prior to the close date to provide you with time to correct any potential technical issues that may disrupt the application submission.
 - d. *Track a Workspace Submission:* After successfully submitting a Workspace application, a Grants.gov Tracking Number (GRANTXXXXXXXX) is automatically assigned to the application. The number is listed on the Confirmation page that is generated after submission. Using the tracking number, access the Track My Application page under the Applicants tab or the Details tab in the submitted Workspace.

For additional training resources, including video tutorials, refer to:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/applicant-training.html>

Applicant Support: Grants.gov provides applicants 24/7 support via the toll-free number 1-800-518-4726 and email at support@grants.gov. For questions related to the specific grant opportunity, contact the number listed in the application package of the grant you are applying for.

If you are experiencing difficulties with your submission, it is best to call the Grants.gov Support Center and get a ticket number. The Support Center ticket number will assist Eastern Region S&PF with tracking your issue and understanding background information on the issue.

4. **Timely Receipt Requirements and Proof of Timely Submission**

Online Submission. All applications must be received by 6 p.m. Eastern Time, September 17, 2020. Proof of timely submission is automatically recorded by Grants.gov. An electronic date/time stamp is generated within the system when the application is successfully received by Grants.gov. The applicant with the AOR role who submitted the application will receive an acknowledgement of receipt and a tracking number (GRANTXXXXXXXX) from Grants.gov with the successful transmission of their application. This applicant with the AOR role will also receive the official date/time stamp and Grants.gov Tracking number in an email serving as proof of their timely submission.

When Eastern Region S&PF successfully retrieves the application from Grants.gov, and acknowledges the download of submissions, Grants.gov will provide an electronic acknowledgment of receipt of the application to the email address of the applicant with the AOR role who submitted the application. Again, proof of timely submission shall be the official date and time that Grants.gov receives your application. Applications received by Grants.gov after the established due date for the program will be considered late and will not be considered for funding by Eastern Region S&PF.

Applicants using slow internet, such as dial-up connections, should be aware that transmission can take some time before Grants.gov receives your application. Again, Grants.gov will provide either an error or a successfully received transmission in the form of an email sent to the applicant with the AOR role attempting to submit the application. The Grants.gov Support Center reports that some applicants end the transmission because they think that nothing is occurring during the transmission process. Please be patient and give the system time to process the application.

Appendix II. Additional Guidelines for Forest Health Treatment Projects

Projects with a Forest Health treatment component should also follow these guidelines:

- Show strong potential for meeting project objectives and must be supported by a biological evaluation that substantiates the need for the project and the strategies proposed.
- Be environmentally acceptable and appropriately documented in accordance with appropriate laws.
- To be eligible for such assistance, the entity having ownership or jurisdiction over the affected land must:
 - Consent, cooperate, and participate in the project.
 - Contribute directly to the work to be done.
 - Have the legal authority to carry out such projects.
- Treatment projects require the following documentation:
 - Appropriate documentation in accordance with relevant and required environmental analyses.
 - Biological evaluations, including pre-treatment and post-treatment evaluations.
 - Work, safety, and security plans where appropriate or required.
- Forest Health authorities may not be used to cut either dead trees or trees that have commercial value.
- Cooperators shall also maintain appropriate records for each project, including the location of treated areas.
- **Attach a completed [Cooperative Lands Forest Pest Treatment Funding Request Form](#) to the application at submission.**

Applicants are encouraged to contact their respective Eastern Region S&PF Forest Health Program specialist for assistance and additional information:

- Eastern Region S&PF, Director for Forest Health and Economics: Susan Ellsworth, 414-297-3021, susan.ellsworth@usda.gov
- New England States and New York (CT, MA, MA, NH, NY, RI, VT): Mike Bohne, 603-868-7708, michael.bohne@usda.gov
- Mid-Atlantic States (DC, DE, MD, NJ, OH, PA, WV): Rick Turcotte, 304-285-1544, Richard.m.turcotte@usfa.gov
- Midwest States (IA, IL, IN, MI, MN, MO, WI): Sunny Lucas, 651-649-5180, sunny.l.lucas@usda.gov

Appendix III. Landscape Scale Restoration Application Requirements Checklist

This is intended as an aide for applicants submitting LSR applications through Grants.gov for the LSR process in the Northeast and Midwest and is not an exhaustive list of the grant requirements. Page numbers noted below are where the requirement is referenced in the FY 2021 LSR Regional Guidance.

Requirements:

- Applicant is a State Forestry Agency (or other relevant State Agency), nonprofit organization (501c3), university, unit of local government, or Tribe (pg. 3).
- Applicant organization must have a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number, active [System for Award Management \(SAM\)](#) registration, and Grants.gov account (pg. 7 and Appendix I).
- Project is focused on rural lands and includes on-the-ground outcomes on nonindustrial private and/or State or local government forest land (pg. 2).
- Project activities within allowable authorities in the [Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act](#) (pg. 3).
- Addresses priority issues/landscapes in the relevant State Forest Action Plan(s) or equivalent restoration strategy (pg. 5).
- Addresses one or more of the National Objectives for LSR (pg. 5).
- Minimum Federal funding request of \$25,000 and 1:1 allowable matching funds (pg. 2).
- Submit draft application to relevant State Forester(s) by August 20 for sponsorship ³ (pg. 1 and 3).
- Submit all forms in Grants.gov by 6 p.m. September 17, 2020 (pg. 1 and Appendix I).

Forms Required:

- SF-424 Application for Federal Assistance ⁴
- SF-424A Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs ⁴
- [R9 LSR Project Narrative Form](#) ⁵ (pg. 7)
- [Sponsor letter](#) from relevant State Forester(s) ³ (pg. 3 and 7) ⁵
- [R9 LSR Budget Spreadsheet](#) ⁵ (pg. 8)
- USDA AD-1047 Certification Regarding Debarment and Suspension ⁴
- SF-424B Assurances for Non-Construction Programs ⁴ (required unless Certified as part of SAM registration)
- Drug-Free Workplace Certification:
 - State Agencies submit: USDA AD-1052 ⁴
 - Non-State entities submit: USDA AD-1049 ⁴
- Regarding Lobbying, required for projects requesting over \$100,000 in Federal funding:
 - For entities that lobby: SF-LLL Disclosure of Lobbying Activities ⁴
 - For entities that do not lobby: [FS-1500-35](#) Certification Regarding Lobbying ⁵
- USDA AD-3030 Representations Regarding Felony Conviction and Tax Delinquent Status for Corporate Applicants, if applicable (applicant determine if form applies to them) ⁴
- If project includes forest health treatments:** Complete and attach the [Cooperative Lands Forest Pest Treatment Funding Request](#) (pg. 4 and Appendix II). ⁵
- If project includes Forest Fire Hazard Mitigation activities:** Complete and attach the [National Fire Plan Operations and Reporting System \(NFPORS\) Form](#) (pg. 4). ⁵

³ State Forester sponsorship is not required for applications submitted by Tribes.

⁴ Form available in Grants.gov

⁵ Submitted using the Attachments Form in Grants.gov