

Instructions Document for the U.S. Forest Service Great Lakes Restoration Initiative Cooperative Weed Management Areas Request for Applications

FY 2021 Applications due by 6:00 PM Eastern, December 11, 2020

Background and Purpose

The interagency Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) targets improvements to the most significant environmental problems within the Great Lakes Basin. Through an agreement with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service (FS) has received funding to support projects that implement strategic, priority actions within FS authorities to restore, protect, and maintain the Great Lakes ecosystem. For this GLRI Request for Applications (RFA) for Cooperative Weed Management Areas (CWMAs), successful projects will address invasive plant species that pose significant ecological threats in the Great Lakes Basin. Funds are available for the following program area:

Invasive Plant Species: Detect, prevent, eradicate, and/or control invasive plant species to promote ecological resiliency, watershed stability, and biological diversity on Federal, State, or other public or private land.

Estimated Funding: \$850,000

Grant Limits: Minimum Federal request is \$15,000 and maximum Federal request is \$50,000.

GLRI Focus Area: Invasive Species

Eligibility

The GLRI funding is available to CWMAs and similar organizations, e.g., Cooperative Invasive Species Management Areas (CISMAs) and Partnerships for Regional Invasive Species Management (PRISMs), etc., that work within the Great Lakes Basin of Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and New York. CWMAs and similar groups are organized partnerships of Federal, State, and local government agencies, Tribes, individuals, and various interested groups that manage invasive plants across jurisdictional and landownership boundaries within a defined area, generally a county or larger in size. Applications may include work on all land ownerships within the Great Lakes watershed of the United States.

The Great Lakes watershed is defined as those areas within the United States that currently or historically drain into Lake Superior, Lake Michigan, Lake Huron, Lake Erie, or Lake Ontario, or drain into the St. Lawrence River west of where the International Boundary line leaves the river. A map of the Great Lakes watershed is provided in [appendix A](#); eligible counties with lands in the watershed are listed in [appendix B](#).

Program Area Information for CWMAs

Great Lakes Action Plan III Objective: 2.2 – Control established invasive species

Description: Using a competitive process, funds will be provided to CWMAs (or their designated partners). CWMAs are local organizations that leverage funds to implement invasive plant control projects across jurisdictional boundaries. CWMAs are highly visible, building community awareness and participation, as well as focusing attention and presenting a united effort to Federal, Tribal, State, and local agencies, as well as nonprofit partners. CWMAs provide an early detection and rapid response network by ensuring that partners are aware of, and are able to identify and respond to, invasions.

Great Lakes Action Plan III Measure of Progress: 2.2.1 – Number of acres controlled for targeted invasive species by GLRI-funded projects.

Minimum Requirements

- All proposed projects must lie entirely within the Great Lakes watershed of the United States.
- Applications must address detection, prevention, eradication, and/or control of invasive plant species, including measurable targets and results. All vegetation manipulation project applications shall include a monitoring plan that evaluates project success and describes actions taken if objectives are not met, as well as a description of actions that will be taken to prevent the reestablishment of invasive plants, including restoration work.
- Letters (or e-messages) of support from appropriate entities must be included. If the project is on national forest land, concurrence is required by the Forest Supervisor under this RFA; on Tribal lands, concurrence is required from the Tribe's designated authority for approving activities. Projects that span ownership types will need concurrence from each relevant entity.
- A minimum 20% match of the **total project cost** (Federal request plus match) is required. The matching share can be calculated as 25 percent of the Federal request.
- Annual progress reports are required with a final report due upon project completion. Information required includes species treated, method of treatment, and acres treated.
- Applications must show capacity to be fully implemented in the time proposed (not to exceed 2 years).
- Projects must post a visible project identification sign, erected as appropriate at each on-the-ground project, that includes project information and purpose, GLRI reference, and Federal agencies involved.
- Applicant organization must be listed as a CWMA partner or steering committee member.
- CWMA Coordinator must be the project contact or provide a letter of support for the application.

Evaluation Criteria (Relative Weight)

Successful applications will directly address elements listed in the evaluation criteria below and include the key metrics of acres treated, cost per acre, and species proposed for removal and restoration.

- *Addresses important invasive plant species in the Great Lakes watershed (25%)* – Examples of species targeted by GLRI include, but are not limited to: baby's breath, buckthorn, garlic mustard, Japanese barberry, Japanese knotweed, lyme grass, invasive strains of *Phragmites*, purple loosestrife, wild parsnip, Eurasian watermilfoil, and hydrilla. Additional species that are not listed here, but still pose a legitimate ecological threat, will also be accepted. The scope of work should specifically address a local watershed strategy for the protection, maintenance, or restoration of the chemical, biological, or physical integrity of the Great Lakes Basin. Clearly demonstrate project objectives in one or more of the following categories: 1) detection, 2) prevention, 3) eradication, and/or 4) control. Include a monitoring plan that evaluates project success and describes actions taken if objectives are not met, as well as a description of actions that will be taken to prevent the reestablishment of invasive plants.
- *Addresses priority landscapes (25%)* – Provide a clear connection to planned actions in the [Great Lakes Action Plan III](#), relevant Lakewide Action and Management Plan, National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (if applicable), Tribal land management plan (if applicable), or [State Forest Action Plan](#) (if applicable). Priority will be given to project applications that clearly demonstrate the benefits to water quality, habitats, plant community resiliency, watershed stability, and biological diversity at the watershed scale.
- *Measurable results/outcomes expected (30%)* – Include specific units of work to be accomplished (number of acres treated) and include estimated outcomes contributing to community resiliency, watershed diversity, and biological diversity. Total cost per acre will be a factor in rating your application. Demonstrate long-term commitment (3 to 5 years) to project monitoring and follow-up treatments if necessary.
- *Partnerships and other considerations (20%)* – Describe how the project strengthens collaboration in invasive plant management and/or increases capacity of the partnership to perform and maintain work. Projects should identify partners and include letters of commitment, including specific quantitative or qualitative contributions towards project planning and implementation. If the project has the potential to provide knowledge or technology transfer (defined as the sharing of knowledge, tools, and innovations for practical application), please detail this potential.

Match

The match must be met by eligible and allowable costs and is subject to match provisions in grant regulations (see [Federal Regulations Title 2 Part 200.306 and Subpart E for Cost Principles](#)). Match must be documented sufficiently to support financial tracking and accountability. Matching funds and in-kind support must be documented within the grant period and be within program authorities and documented in the grant scope of work. Note that the minimum cost-share requirement is 20 percent of the total project cost (Federal request plus match). The following formula may be used to determine the minimum matching requirement for a particular Federal request:

$$\text{Federal amount of funds} \times .25 = 20 \text{ percent minimum matching requirement}$$

How to Submit an Electronic Application to the U.S. Forest Service through Grants.gov

Submit all applications for this GLRI funding opportunity through [Grants.gov](#). Search for Grant Opportunity Number **USFS-GLRI-CWMA-2021**. Grants.gov has a [full set of instructions on how organizations can apply for opportunities](#) on its website.

Applicants are required to apply online through Grants.gov using Workspace. Workspace is a shared, online environment where members of a grant team may access and edit different forms within an application. After creating a Workspace, you may work online or download the application package, instructions, and forms, which allows you to work offline. Grants.gov recommends submitting your application package 24 to 48 hours before the closing date to give you time to correct any potential technical issues that disrupt your initial application submission. All applications must be submitted through Grants.gov.

If you have not applied for a grant through Grants.gov before, you must complete several registration steps before you can submit your application. Note that **DUNS and SAM registrations may take several weeks**, after which a Grants.gov account can be obtained within a few days. Please review the requirements for submitting an application and take steps early to be ready to submit your application by the deadline.

Registrations must be current and in place at the time you submit your application, including these:

- System for Award Management (SAM) registration
- Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) registration
- Grants.gov registration by an authorized organization representative (AOR)

All forms required for the grant package will also be available on the Grants.gov website. Be sure to fill out the Project Narrative Supplement and all Federal forms. Other formats will not be accepted.

Applications no longer require the documented support of State Foresters. However, you are encouraged to work with your State forestry agency and research how your project fits into the goals and objectives of the State Forest Action Plan. [Click here to look up State Foresters](#).

Complete application packages will include the following:

Required forms available through the Grants.gov application package:

- SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance
- SF-424A, Budget Information for Non-Construction programs
- AD-1047, Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, and other Responsibility Matters
- Attachments Form (must be included in the application package in order to attach additional forms below).

Required agency-specific forms to be submitted by uploading through the Attachments Form in the Grants.gov application package:

- [Project Narrative Supplement Form](#) (available in the Related Documents tab for this opportunity in Grants.gov)

Forms available through the Grants.gov application package that are required if applicable:

- AD-1049, Certification Regarding Drug-Free Workplace (for all non-State entities),
OR AD-1052, Certification Regarding Drug-Free Workplace (for State and State Agencies)
- AD-3030, Representations Regarding Felony Conviction and Tax Delinquent Status (for Corporate Applicants)

Customer Support: Grants.gov provides customer support via toll-free number 800-518-4726 and email at support@grants.gov. For questions related to the specific grant opportunity, contact the appropriate person listed below.

General Questions

John Kyhl, Eastern Region State and Private Forestry (S&PF) Invasive Plants Program Manager, john.f.kyhl@usda.gov

Jason Stevens, Eastern Region Invasive Species Coordinator, jason.stevens@usda.gov

Sheela Johnson, Eastern Region S&PF GLRI Contact, 224-999-1997, sheela.johnson@usda.gov

U.S. Forest Service Eastern Region State and Private Forestry Contacts:

- New York: **Constance Carpenter**, Durham Field Office Representative, 603-868-7694, constance.carpenter@usda.gov
- Ohio and Pennsylvania: **Joe Koloski**, Morgantown Field Office Representative, 304-285-1540, joseph.koloski@usda.gov
- Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan, Illinois, and Indiana: **Carleen Yocum**, St. Paul Field Office Representative, 651-649-5276, carleen.yocum@usda.gov

U.S. Forest Service National Forest System Contacts:

- New York: **Mary Beth Deller**, Finger Lakes National Forest, Rochester, VT, 802-767-4261, mary.deller@usda.gov
- Minnesota: **Jack Greenlee**, Superior National Forest, Aurora, MN, 218-229-8817, jack.greenlee@usda.gov
- Michigan:
 - ◇ **Carol Young**, Huron-Manistee National Forest, Cadillac, MI, 231-775-5023 x8760, carol.young@usda.gov
 - ◇ **Ian Shackelford**, Ottawa National Forest, Ironwood, MI, 906-932-1330 x331, ian.shackelford@usda.gov
 - ◇ **Jason Stevens**, Hiawatha National Forest, St. Ignace, MI, jason.stevens@usda.gov (interim contact for this RFA)
- Wisconsin: **Steve Janke**, Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest, Lakewood, WI, 715-276-6333, steve.janke@usda.gov
- Illinois: **Delane Strohmeyer**, Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie, Wilmington, IL, 815-423-6370, delane.strohmeyer@usda.gov

Important Dates

- **October 22, 2020, 9:00 am Central/10:00 am Eastern** – Webinar to discuss the RFA: purpose of the grant program area, eligibility, and how to apply in the Grants.gov system. This webinar will be recorded and available for viewing later. [Register and view additional webinar information here.](#)
- **December 11, 2020** – Applications must be submitted to the U.S. Forest Service through Grants.gov by 6:00 p.m. Eastern.
- **March 2021** – U.S. Forest Service expects to notify all applicants regarding selection results.

Review Process

All applications will undergo a preliminary review to dismiss incomplete or ineligible applications. An application review team consisting of staff from the FS, State forestry agencies, and nongovernmental organizations will collaboratively review, evaluate, and prioritize project applications. The review team will complete the review of applications and develop a recommended ranking list of projects. The recommended list of applications will be submitted to the Region 9 Regional Forester for approval. All applicants will be notified of the final selection or non-selection of their applications. Full text of all applications and reviewer comments may be posted on our website after selections have been made.

Project Narrative Supplement Form Instructions
U.S. Forest Service Great Lakes Restoration Initiative
Cooperative Weed Management Areas
Request for Applications, Fiscal Year 2021

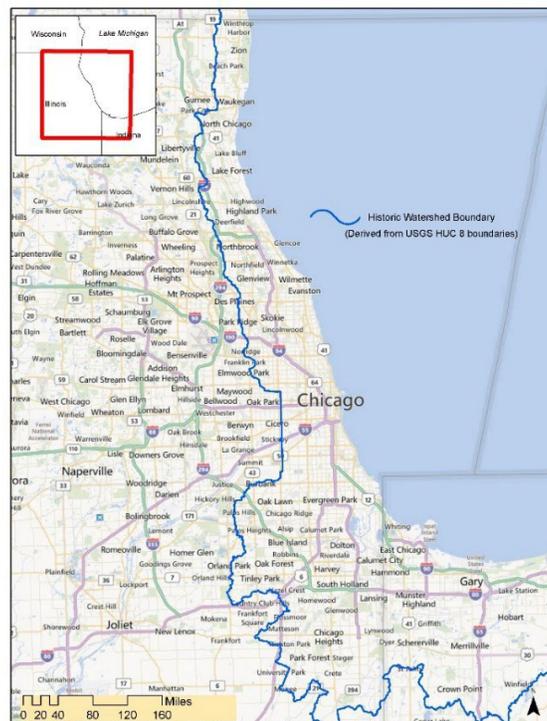
Register and apply through Grants.gov using these instructions. These are required fields of information:

- Short Title:** Provide a short title for future reference to the project. This must be the same title used on the SF-424 Application for Federal Assistance.
- Organization Name:** The name of the CWMA submitting the application.
- Funds Requested:** The amount of Federal funding requested in the application.
- Project Coordinates:** Provide coordinates (in decimal degrees) for a point representing the general location of project work. Selected applicants will be asked to provide a shapefile of the project area impacted.
- Start and End Dates:** Requested starting and ending dates for work in the application, not to exceed 2 years from the date of award.
- Project Overview:** Provide a short summary of the project that includes the scope, location, expected accomplishments, and water quality/habitat benefits.
- Scope of Work:** Provide a narrative that outlines the methods proposed and specifically addresses project benefits and impacts on water quality and species diversity as part of a local watershed plan within the Great Lakes Basin.
- Priority Landscape:** Provide information on the site location and its connection to a target water body, identifying local watershed plans and links to applicable plans such as: State Forest Action Plan, National Forest or Tribal land management plans, Great Lakes Action Plan III, Lakewide Action and Management Plan.
- Results/Outcomes:** Estimate the results of your project in terms of acres treated.
- Partnerships:** List and/or describe any partners who will be materially involved and their specific roles. Clearly identify all partner direct recipients of Federal funds, including name of the organization and funding amount. The work responsibilities or sub-grant objectives of partner recipients should be clearly described. Attach letters of support in Grants.gov; hard copy mailings are not required. Support letters can be addressed to: *Gina Owens, Regional Forester, U.S. Forest Service Eastern Region, 626 East Wisconsin Avenue, Milwaukee, WI 53202.*
- Timeline:** Provide a brief, approximate schedule showing intermediate steps and major milestones. Please indicate if a specific start date is critical. Project timeline is not to exceed 2 years from the date of award.
- Qualifications:** Include names and titles of the project manager and key personnel. List any relevant experience and certifications of the organization and personnel.
- Budget Justification:** Provide a description of budget items not clearly identified in the scope of work or measurable results, including personnel, travel, supplies, equipment (>\$5,000 unit cost), indirect costs, and other, included in the SF-424A. Clearly identify match within the appropriate categories as applicable.

Appendix A. Great Lakes Watershed Map
U.S. Forest Service Great Lakes Restoration Initiative
Cooperative Weed Management Areas
Request for Applications



Map Inset for Illinois and Indiana



In Illinois and Indiana, for purposes of this RFA, the Great Lakes Basin includes the historic watersheds of the North Shore channel, Chicago, and Little Calumet Rivers. This description was provided by EPA and supported by the IL DNR.

Appendix B. Counties Wholly or Partially in the Great Lakes Watershed

U.S. Forest Service Great Lakes Restoration Initiative
Cooperative Weed Management Areas
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Counties Entirely in the Great Lakes Watershed

Indiana

DeKalb, LaGrange, Steuben

Michigan

Alcona, Alger, Allegan, Alpena, Antrim, Arenac, Baraga, Barry, Bay, Benzie, Branch, Calhoun, Cass, Charlevoix, Cheboygan, Chippewa, Clare, Clinton, Crawford, Delta, Dickinson, Eaton, Emmet, Genesee, Gladwin, Grand Traverse, Gratiot, Hillsdale, Houghton, Huron, Ingham, Ionia, Iosco, Isabella, Jackson, Kalamazoo, Kalkaska, Kent, Keweenaw, Lake, Lapeer, Leelanau, Lenawee, Livingston, Luce, Mackinac, Macomb, Manistee, Marquette, Mason, Mecosta, Menominee, Midland, Missaukee, Monroe, Montcalm, Montmorency, Muskegon, Newaygo, Oakland, Oceana, Ogemaw, Ontonagon, Osceola, Oscoda, Otsego, Ottawa, Presque Isle, Roscommon, Saginaw, St. Clair, St. Joseph, Sanilac, Schoolcraft, Shiawassee, Tuscola, Van Buren, Washtenaw, Wayne, Wexford.

New York

Erie, Genesee, Jefferson, Monroe, Niagara, Orleans, Oswego, Seneca, Wayne, Wyoming

Ohio

Cuyahoga, Defiance, Erie, Fulton, Hancock, Henry, Huron, Lake, Lorain, Lucas, Ottawa, Paulding, Putnam, Sandusky, Seneca, Van Wert, Williams, Wood

Wisconsin

Brown, Calumet, Door, Florence, Kewaunee, Manitowoc, Marinette, Menominee, Oconto, Outagamie, Ozaukee, Sheboygan, Waupaca, Winnebago

Counties Partially in the Great Lakes Watershed

Illinois

Cook, Lake

Indiana

Adams, Allen, Elkhart, Kosciusko, Lake, LaPorte, Noble, Porter, St. Joseph, Wells

Michigan

Berrien, Gogebic, Iron

Minnesota

Aitkin, Carlton, Cook, Itasca, Lake, Pine, St. Louis

New York

Allegany, Cattaraugus, Cayuga, Chautauqua, Chemung, Cortland, Essex, Franklin, Hamilton, Herkimer, Lewis, Livingston, Madison, Oneida, Onondaga, Ontario, Schuyler, St. Lawrence, Steuben, Tioga, Tompkins, Yates

Ohio

Allen, Ashland, Ashtabula, Auglaize, Crawford, Geauga, Hardin, Marion, Medina, Mercer, Portage, Richland, Shelby, Stark, Summit, Trumbull, Wyandot

Pennsylvania

Crawford, Erie, Potter

Wisconsin

Adams, Ashland, Bayfield, Columbia, Dodge, Douglas, Fond du Lac, Forest, Green Lake, Iron, Kenosha, Langlade, Marathon, Marquette, Milwaukee, Oneida, Portage, Racine, Shawano, Vilas, Washington, Waukesha, Waushara