USDA Forest Service Community Forest and Open Space Conservation Program

Request for Applications

Informational Webinar

March 7, 2023
Webinar Logistics

• This webinar will be recorded
• Please mute your mic during presentations
• Please use the chat for questions and comments during presentations
• Time for verbal questions at the end
Webinar agenda

• Program overview
• Eligibility
• Public benefits
• Funding/cost share
• How to apply
• Project scoring
• Project timelines
• Community Forest Program priorities
• Common questions & communication
• Questions
Community Forest Program (CFP) Accomplishments

- 64 projects
- 28,140 acres
- $78.2 Million total value
- $23.3 Million from CFP

- 24 currently funded and in progress
Community Forest Program (CFP)

• Purpose
• History
• Implemented at the local level
• Projects are for full acquisition, not conservation easement purchases
• Projects selected through a Nationally competitive process
Community Forest Program Website


Lots of useful reference material:

- Most recent Request for applications
- Regional Contacts
- CFP Final Revised Rule (April 2021)
- CFP Road Map (reference document for all stages of project)
- Scoring Guidance (January 2023)
- Application Guidance
- Map Guidance
- State Forester Contacts
- Frequently Asked Questions (January 2023)
Eligible Land

**Private** forest lands that:

1) At least 75% forested;
2) At least 5 acres in size;
3) Are threatened by conversion to nonforest uses;
4) Are not lands held in trust by the United States;
5) If acquired by an eligible entity, can provide defined community benefits under the CFP and allow public access.
Eligible Entities

• **Local governments**
  • Any municipal government, county government, or other local government with jurisdiction over local land use decisions.

• **Indian tribes**
  • Federally recognized Indian tribes and Alaska Native Corporations.

• **Qualified nonprofit organizations**
  • An organization that is described in Section 170(h)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and operates in accordance with one or more of the conservation purposes.
Public Benefits

• Economic
• Educational
• Environmental
• Recreational
• Community Involvement
Acquisition Requirements

- CFP projects are for land acquisition not conservation easements or other partial interests
- Record with the Deed a Notice of Grant requirement
  - Acquired with CFP funds
  - Property description or reference to location in the deed
  - Grant recipient info
  - Purpose of the CFP
  - Grant award number
  - Will be managed according to Community Forest Plan and CFP purposes
  - Limitations on transfers of land or interests
  - Funds reversion language
CFP Funding

The program is funded through general appropriations.

For CFP 2023 $6,000,000 is available for projects and State and Tribal technical assistance on funded projects and if requested by the State or Tribe.

The maximum request is $600,000 for a project.
CFP Funding

• CFP can provide up to 50% of the total allowable project costs
• The other 50% must be from non-federal sources
CFP funds allowable costs

• Allowable project and cost share costs will include the purchase price and the following transactional costs associated with the acquisition:
  • (1) Appraisals and appraisal reviews; (Yellow Book)
  • (2) Land surveys;
  • (3) Legal and closing costs;
  • (4) Development of the Community Forest Plan; and
  • (5) Title examination.
How to apply

• Up to 8 pages to describing:
  • project
  • public benefits
  • community involvement
  • threat to conversion
  • strategic contribution and connection
  • Additional application requirements in the CFP Rule and the Request for Applications

• 2 full page (8.5 x 11) maps

• Any documentation necessary to confirm applicant is an eligible entity
How Projects are Scored

- 2023 Scoring Guidance posted on the National CFP Website

- 20 points for the public benefits the proposed Community Forest will provide. (Economic, Educational, Environmental and Recreational)

- 10 points for Public Participation/Community Involvement
  - A score of 10 is reserved for projects that show broad stakeholder engagement including underrepresented groups and that is supported by data and/or specific examples

- 5 points for Strategic Contribution and Connection

- 5 points on likelihood of conversion to a non-forest use
CFP Application Timeline

- RFA for is published in Federal Register
- Applications due to State Forester or Tribal Equivalent
- State/Tribe submits ALL applications to Forest Service Regional Manager
- Regional Manager Reviews then sends to National Team to Review, Score and Rank
- If a project is funded the goal is to complete the project in 2 years or less
Community Forest Program Priorities

• Public access (program requirement)
• Community input & involvement
• Community values
• Community benefit beyond acres protected
Common questions & communication

• When is the soonest a partner would be able to acquire property if awarded funding in 2023?

• If this isn’t a conservation easement program, is there specific language needed in the deed upon acquisition?

• How many applications are there typically in a year? What are the chances of receiving funding?

• Are there tips to increase funding chances?

• If I have additional questions, where can I submit them?
CFP contacts by Forest Service Region

Northern & Intermountain Regions (ID, MT, NV, UT, ND)
   Kris Tempel, 406-210-1412  kris.tempel@usda.gov

Rocky Mountain Region (CO, KS, NE, WY, SD)
   Todd Gardiner, 970-210-9103 todd.gardiner@usda.gov

Southwestern Region (AZ, NM)
   Laura Moser, 928-607-6040  laura.moser@usda.gov

Pacific Southwest Region (CA, HI & Pacific Island Territories)
   Dana Walsh, CA 530-450-5555 dana.walsh@usda.gov
   Katie Friday, HI 808-854-2620 kathleen.friday@usda.gov
CFP contacts by Forest Service Region

Pacific Northwest & Alaska Regions (OR, WA, AK)
  Candice Polisky, 971.710.2346 candice.polisky@usda.gov

Southern Region (AL, AR, FL, GA, KY, LA, MS, NC, OK, SC, TN, TX, VA)
  Susan Granbery, 770-883-8925 susan.granbery@usda.gov

Eastern Region (CT, DC, DE, IA, IL, IN, MA, MD, ME, MI, MN, MO, NH, NJ, NY, OH, PA, RI, VT, WI, WV)
  Neal Bungard, 603-833-3287 neal.bungard@usda.gov

International Institute of Tropical Forestry (PR, USVI)
  Magaly Figueroa, 787-309-9565 magaly.figueroa@usda.gov