



Eastern Region State and Private Forestry Fiscal Year 2022 Landscape Scale Restoration Competitive Process Request for Applications Instructions

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Submission Dates for Fiscal Year (FY) 2022

- **Submit all applications through [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) by 6 p.m. Eastern, November 5, 2021.** Search for grant Opportunity Number **USDA-FS-2022-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 **September 24, 2021**. 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, **November 5, 2021**.

Purpose of the Landscape Scale Restoration Competitive Process

The State and Private Forestry Landscape Scale Restoration (LSR) Program purpose is: “To encourage collaborative, science-based restoration of priority forest landscapes.”¹ As noted in the [Landscape Scale Restoration Manual \(FSM 3800\)](#), this competitive grant program supports, “high impact projects that lead to measurable outcomes on the landscape, leverage public and private resources, and further priorities identified in each [State Forest Action Plan](#) or equivalent restoration strategy.”² The project scale must be the most appropriate size based on the land ownerships and desired outcomes for the landscape, and may result in single, multistate, or cross-regional implementation.

¹ The LSR program is authorized by the [Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act](#).

² The proposed Forest Service Manual (FSM) 3800 for Landscape Scale Restoration provides national program requirements.

Key Points

- **Who Can Apply:** State forestry or an equivalent State agency, units of local government, [Federally recognized Indian Tribes](#), non-profit organizations (defined as a 501c3), and universities are eligible to submit applications.³ 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 Tribal, State, or local government forest land.⁴ 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. Note: While projects may include outreach, education, and/or training as a means to achieve project goals, those should not be the sole outcome. For what is considered “on-the-ground” outcomes for LSR, see the [national quantitative accomplishment measures](#). All LSR projects must accomplish at least one of those measures.
- **State Forest Action Plans:** Projects must further the priorities, e.g., goal, strategy, and/or priority landscape in the 2020 State Forest Action Plans (2017 for Vermont) or equivalent restoration strategy.
- **Executive Order 13985: Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government:** We encourage applications that show a clear benefit to underserved/ historically marginalized people and the communities where they reside or the forest areas that they value. Where this is the case, this should be described in the “Project Narrative Form.”
- **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 2022, 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 Eastern Region Federal funding for LSR 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:** One-to-one matching funds must be derived entirely from non-Federal sources. 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

³ Alaska Native Corporations are also eligible; however, this LSR instructions document pertains to projects across the 20 Northeast and Midwest States.

⁴ 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, or other private legal entity, or an Indian Tribe; and/or
- State forest land that is rural, under State or local governmental ownership, and considered to be non-Federal forest land.

Note: Tribal land held in trust by the United States is not considered “Indian-owned land.”

other partners performing work as relevant (this is preferred when funding will go to multiple agencies/ organizations). If funds will 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 2022 budget is received (ranging from April to July in past years). Projects should be completed within 3 years, i.e., FY 2022 projects awarded in spring of 2022 would be completed by September 30, 2025.
- **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, i.e., the 15% 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.
Maximum Federal funding for a multistate or cross-regional project is \$600,000. 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).
For cross-regional projects, the relevant Forest Service Regions and Regional State Forester Organizations will coordinate to determine which will review and score the application.
- **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 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. Federally recognized 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 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 Federally recognized 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 applications per 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.
- Wildfire fuels management projects.
- Demonstration projects that both achieve on-the-ground accomplishments for a specific area and also provide sites for conservation education and tech transfer.
- Community tree planting projects in communities with a population of less than 50,000.⁵
- 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 wildfire 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.
- 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 that 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. The Forest Health Program has a number of National and cross-regional forest health funding opportunities, e.g., Early Detection/Rapid Response (EDRR), Evaluation Monitoring, Forest Service Pesticide Impact Assessment Program, and Special Technology Development Projects. The Forest Health Program specialists can assist in determining the best funding opportunity to apply for.
- **If an application includes forest health treatments:** You are required to attach a completed [Cooperative Lands Forest Pest Treatment Funding Request](#) to the application at submission. Also refer to [Appendix II](#).

⁵ 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.

- **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 Steve Goldman (steven.goldman@usda.gov or 414-308-7775), Eastern Region S&PF, Deputy Director of Fire and Aviation, prior to submission to ensure all funding opportunities are explored.

Projects Not Eligible under this RFA

- Activities in cities or towns with greater than 50,000 inhabitants. Refer to the [LSR Project Planning Tool](#).
- Research: Basic research as defined in 2CFR 422.1, "Systematic study directed toward fuller knowledge or understanding of the fundamental aspects of phenomena and of observable facts without specific applications towards processes or products in mind." Note: Technical transfer, education, and outreach activities associated with applying research can be included in the application. A research entity can be included as a partner and can contribute research as non-match leverage (not funded with the LSR Federal dollars or associated match).
- Construction and capital improvements (facilities, infrastructure, roads). However, capital improvements may be listed as enhanced leverage (not part of the S&PF Federal funding or match).
- Purchase of fire department equipment, including fire weather stations and dry fire hydrants.
- Small business start-up funding.
- Cost-share, reimbursement, and other types of payment directly to private landowners; 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 objectives, outreach and education should not be the sole outcome.
- *Lymantria dispar* (previously known by the common name gypsy moth) Slow-the-Spread (STS) projects. These are determined in cooperation with the STS Foundation.
- Forest Legacy Program and Community Forest and Open Space Program acquisition projects.

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

Clearly and concisely address each of these criteria in the Project Narrative Form.

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.

- 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).

Note: Most States now have a 2020 State Forest Action Plan (except Vermont, which was revised in 2017). The plans are posted on the [National Association of State Foresters website](#). If you don't see the 2020 plan posted there yet, contact the relevant [State Forester\(s\)](#) or [Sherri Wormstead](#).

2. Measurable Outcomes (35 points)

- Describe how the project outcomes will result in science-based restoration of priority landscapes.
- 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.
- Each LSR project must accomplish at least one of the on-the-ground national quantitative measures listed on the next page and may include additional specific measurable results. that show how the Federal investment will lead to outcomes on the landscape. The measures/metrics should be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and timely.
- Include description of less quantifiable return on investments in the narrative section.
- Reviewers will assess if outcomes are commensurate with the budget.

Each LSR project must accomplish at least one of these national quantitative measures:

Quantitative Accomplishment	Description
Acres treated to reduce hazardous fuels	Acres treated to reduce hazardous fuels including prescribed fire, thinning, and other actions that reduce hazardous fuels and mitigate fire risk.
Miles of riparian forest treated to enhance wildlife	Miles of riparian forest treated to protect, conserve, and enhance wildlife and fish habitat.
Acres of habitat treated to enhance wildlife	Acres of habitat treated to enhance wildlife and fish habitat.
Acres of trees and seedlings planted to enhance water quality	Acres of trees and seedlings planted to enhance water quality including riparian buffers, floodplain restoration, and other actions that enhance water quality.
Miles of riparian forest treated to enhance water quality	Miles of riparian forest treated to enhance water quality including riparian buffer establishment or maintenance and other actions that enhance water quality. This does not include any structural enhancements or construction, such as culverts.
Acres treated for insects and disease	Acres treated for insects and disease including through chemical, mechanical, and biological actions that improve forest health conditions. This does not include acres surveyed.
Infested acres treated for invasive plants	Infested acres treated for invasive plants including chemical, mechanical, and biological actions that improve forest health conditions. This does not include acres surveyed.
Acres of silvicultural practice exclusive of other reported treatments	Number of acres treated exclusive of other treatments already reported in another accomplishment field such fire and/or water quality treatments. This could include forest stand improvements, reforestation, or afforestation associated with a forest management activity.
Acres under new forest management plans	A new forest management plan can include a Forest Stewardship Plan; CAP 106 plan, Tree Farm plan, tax abatement plan, equivalent State forest management plan or a landscape plan. If a landscape plan, the plan must focus on discrete/specific geography such as a watershed and not a state-wide landscape level plan.
Private forest landowners reached through technical assistance	Private forest landowners reached through technical assistance that are known to have benefited in some significant and lasting way from the project through more than one interaction. This does not include landowner who only attended a technical or training session without any follow-up or were spoken to only once, such as over the phone, with no follow-up.
Tons of forest products produced (biomass)	Tons of biomass produced that contribute to the forest products industry.
Board feet of forest products produced (timber)	Board feet of timber, e.g. sawlogs or small diameter, produced that contribute to the forest products industry.

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 coordination with or proximity to 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 under section 602 of the Healthy Forest Restoration Act of 2003, Good Neighbor Authority, National Forest stewardship contracting projects, Natural Resources Conservation Service programs, Shared Stewardship agreements, and relevant state-level programs.
- Describe land ownerships for the project area and 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.

Note: 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 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 grant. 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 Narrative Form.

Criteria Scoring Rubric: This rubric is for the review team members to reference while scoring the applications.

Criteria	High Score	Medium Score	Low Score
1. Priority issues/ landscapes in the State Forest Action Plan(s) (SFAP) or equiv. restoration strategy (25 points)	17-25 points • Strong and clear contribution to one or more significant goal, issue, and/or priority landscape in the relevant SFAP(s) or equiv. restoration strategy. • Clear description of how project contributes to a specific strategy(ies) in the SFAP(s) or equiv. restoration strategy.	8-16 points • Clear contribution to a significant goal, issue, or priority landscape in the relevant SFAP(s) or equiv. restoration strategy.	0-7 points • A simple assertion or weak or general connection to the relevant SFAP(s) or equiv. restoration strategy.
2. Measurable Outcomes (35 points)	24-35 points • Compelling, clear, and concise description of how quantitative and qualitative outcomes will influence positive change to achieve one or more national LSR objectives. • Measures are specific, achievable, and clearly show how the Fed. investment will lead to outcomes on the landscape. • Outcomes are commensurate (or greater) with the budget.	12-23 points • Description of how outcomes will achieve one or more national LSR objectives. • Outcomes are commensurate with the budget.	0-11 points • Weak description or lack of clarity for measures. • Outcomes limited compared to the budget.
3. Collaboration and Integrated Delivery (20 points)	14-20 points • Demonstrates strong collaboration with and commitment by partners, adding value and lasting benefits to the project. • High coordination with or proximity to complementary Federal and/or State landscape-scale programs/projects.⁶ • Includes cross-boundary collaboration by proximity to or inclusion of a combination of Tribal, State, local government, and/or private lands.	7-13 points • Demonstrates moderate collaboration with and commitment by partners, adding value to the project. • Limited-to-moderate coordination with or proximity to complementary programs/projects. • Limited-to-moderate cross-boundary proximity or collaboration	0-6 points • A simple assertion or very little or no meaningful collaboration. • Little to no coordination with complementary programs/projects. • Little to no cross-boundary proximity or impact.
4. Leverage (10 points)	7-10 points • Substantial leveraged contributions (match and non-match) that maximize Federal funding for project outcomes.	3-6 points • Moderate leveraged contributions.	0-2 points • Minimal-to-no leveraged contributions.
5. Knowledge and Technical Transfer (10 points)	7-10 points • Clear and specific description of how others will learn from the project. • Project has high potential to inform practitioners and enhance effectiveness of similar initiatives.	3-6 points • Includes description of how other will learn from the project. • Project has moderate potential to inform others.	0-2 points • A simple assertion or limited description of how others will learn from the project.

⁶ For example, e.g., Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program, landscape areas designated for insect and disease treatments under section 602 of the Healthy Forest Restoration Act of 2003, Good Neighbor Authority, stewardship contracting projects, Natural Resources Conservation Service programs, Shared Stewardship agreements, and relevant State programs.

Preparing an Application

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 **September 24, 2021**. 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](#) by 6 p.m. Eastern, **November 5, 2021**. 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 web page](#). Along with other valuable information, this site provides full text of previous competitive project applications, reviewer comments, and ranked lists. Applicants should also be familiar with the relevant [State's Forest Action Plan\(s\)](#).

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.
- For projects requesting over \$100,000 in Federal Funding: SF-LLL Disclosure of Lobbying Activities for entities that lobby or Grants.gov Lobbying Form for entities that do not lobby (this replaces FS-1500-35).
- 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):

- [Eastern Region LSR Project Narrative Form](#) (required)
- Maps or photos to accompany the narrative (optional)
- [Eastern Region 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.
- 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).

Project Narrative Form Instructions

Clearly and concisely respond to each section. For the longer sections we encourage you to include sub-headings, line spacing, and/or other formatting for ease of reading (rather than fill every line with words). You may format text in MS Word and then copy and paste it into the Form. Some text formatting is available in the PDF form, e.g., bold, underline, and italic. To format text in the Form: Highlight the text, right click, and select "Text Style."

- **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 and Purpose:** 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:** Provide the output amount for at least one of the quantitative accomplishment measures listed and, as relevant, add additional, specific measurable results in the rows at the bottom of the table (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 February 1, 2022.

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

Applicants are encouraged to reach out to the relevant State Forester and Forest Service Field Office Representative during application development to ensure the project aligns with program purpose and eligibility and receive input to strengthen your application.

Overall Program Contacts for LSR:

- **Eastern Region S&PF LSR Program Lead:** Sherri Wormstead, 603-868-7737, sherri.j.wormstead@usda.gov
- **NMSFA Executive Director:** Ian MacFarlane, 202-526-4804, ian@northeasternforests.org

Forest Service Eastern Region S&PF, Field Office Contacts:

- **For New England and New York:** Christopher Cook, Acting Durham, NH, Field Office Representative through August 22, 814-688-0039, christopher.j.cook@usda.gov. From August 23 and later, Constance Carpenter, Durham, NH, Field Office Representative, 603-868-7694, constance.carpenter@usda.gov
- **For Mid-Atlantic States (DC, DE, MD, NJ, OH, PA, WV):** Joe Koloski, Morgantown, WV, Field Office Representative, 304-285-1540, joseph.koloski@usda.gov
- **For Midwest States (IA, IL, IN, MI, MN, MO, WI):** Carleen Yocum, St. Paul, MN, Field Office Representative, 651-649-5276, carleen.yocum@usda.gov

For Tribal Entities: You may contact the Field Office contacts listed above or Stephen Handler, Acting Tribal Relations Program Lead, 906-482-6303, stephen.handler@usda.gov

Appendix I. Instructions for Submitting Applications through Grants.gov

The Eastern Region S&PF uses Grants.gov to provide a single site to find and apply for grant funding opportunities. Submit all applications for this funding opportunity through [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov). Search for grant Opportunity Number **USDA-FS-2022-LSR**. Partners and collaborators must submit an initial draft of their Grants.gov application to involved State Foresters by COB **September 24, 2021**. 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). State Foresters provide support letters to applicants before November 5. Applicants submit your application to [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) by 6 p.m. Eastern, **November 5, 2021**. The following section provides guidance on how to submit applications through Grants.gov.

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 by email at support@grants.gov.

1. How to Register to Apply through Grants.gov

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 **DUNS and SAM registrations may take several weeks or more to complete**. Therefore, ensure you apply for your DUNS and SAM registration promptly.

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

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

- a) [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.
- b) [Register with SAM](#): All organizations must register with the System for Award Management (SAM) and SAM registration must be renewed annually.
- c) [Register with Grants.gov](#)
- d) [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.
- e) [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.
- f) [Track Role Status](#).

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.

2. 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 and training videos, refer to the [Grants.gov "Get Started on Your Workspace Application" web page](#).

- a. **Create a Workspace:** Log in to your Grants.gov account first. 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 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. For page-specific help: click the blue question mark icon near the upper-right corner of each page.

Mandatory Fields in Forms: In the forms, fields marked with an asterisk and a different background color are mandatory and must be completed to successfully submit your application.

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 the SF-424 is completed, the information will transfer to the other forms.

Note: 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 then accessed through Adobe Reader. Visit the [Adobe Software Compatibility page on Grants.gov](#) to download the appropriate version of the software.

- c. **Submit a Workspace:** Submit your application 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.

Applicant Support: For additional training resources, including video tutorials, refer to the [Grants.gov Training page](#). Grants.gov provides applicants 24/7 support via the toll-free number 1-800-518-4726 and by email at support@grants.gov. If you are experiencing difficulties with your submission, it is best to call the Grants.gov Support Center and get a ticket number to track your issue.

3. Timely Receipt Requirements and Proof of Timely Submission

All applications must be received by 6 p.m. Eastern Time, November 5, 2021. 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, serving as proof of their timely submission.

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 Forest Markets: 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 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 grant requirements.

We encourage applications that show a clear benefit to underserved/historically marginalized people and the communities where they reside or the forest areas that they value. Where this is the case, this should be described in the “Project Narrative Form.” This supports [Executive Order 13985: Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government](#).

Requirements:

- ☐ Applicant is a State Forestry Agency (or other relevant State Agency), nonprofit organization (501c3), university, unit of local government, or Federally recognized Tribe ([see pg. 3](#)).
- ☐ Applicant organization must have a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number, active [System for Award Management \(SAM\)](#) registration, and Grants.gov account (see Appendix I).
- ☐ Project is focused on rural forest lands ([see pg. 2](#)).
- ☐ Project includes on-the-ground outcomes on nonindustrial private and/or State or local government forest land and will result in accomplishments for at least one of the national LSR quantitative measures ([see pg. 5](#)).
- ☐ Project activities within allowable authorities in the [Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act](#) ([see pg. 3](#)).
- ☐ Addresses priority issues/landscapes in the relevant State Forest Action Plan(s) or equivalent restoration strategy ([see pg. 5](#)).
- ☐ Addresses one or more of the National Objectives for LSR ([see pg. 5](#)).
- ☐ Minimum Federal funding request of \$25,000 and 1:1 allowable matching funds ([see pg. 2](#)).
- ☐ Submit draft application to relevant State Forester(s) by September 24 for sponsorship ⁷ ([see pg. 1](#) and [3](#)).
- ☐ Submit all forms in Grants.gov by 6 p.m. November 5, 2021 ([see pg. 1](#) and [Appendix I](#)).

Forms Required:

- ☐ SF-424 Application for Federal Assistance ⁸
- ☐ SF-424A Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs ⁸
- ☐ [Eastern Region LSR Project Narrative Form](#) ⁹ ([see pg. 10](#))
- ☐ [Sponsor letter](#) from relevant State Forester(s) ⁷ ([see pg. 3](#) and [11](#)) ⁹
- ☐ [Eastern Region LSR Budget Spreadsheet](#) ⁹ ([see pg. 10](#))
- ☐ USDA AD-1047 Certification Regarding Debarment and Suspension ⁸
- ☐ SF-424B Assurances for Non-Construction Programs ⁸ (required unless Certified as part of SAM registration)
- ☐ Drug-Free Workplace Certification:
 - State Agencies submit: USDA AD-1052 ⁸
 - Non-State entities submit: USDA AD-1049 ⁸
- ☐ Regarding Lobbying, required for projects requesting over \$100,000 in Federal funding:
 - For entities that lobby: SF-LLL Disclosure of Lobbying Activities ⁸
 - For entities that do not lobby: Grants.gov Lobbying Form ⁸ (Note: This replaces FS-1500-35)
- ☐ USDA AD-3030 Representations Regarding Felony Conviction and Tax Delinquent Status for Corporate Applicants, if applicable (applicant determine if form applies to them) ⁸
- ☐ **If project includes forest health treatments:** Complete and attach the [Cooperative Lands Forest Pest Treatment Funding Request](#) ([pg. 4](#) and [Appendix II](#)). ⁹
- ☐ **If project includes Forest Fire Hazard Mitigation activities:** Complete and attach the [National Fire Plan Operations and Reporting System \(NFORS\) Form](#) ([see pg. 5](#)). ⁹

⁷ State Forester sponsorship is not required for applications submitted by Federally recognized Tribes.

⁸ Form available in Grants.gov

⁹ Submitted using the Attachments Form in Grants.gov