



Forest Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Landowner Support:

Landowner Payment Programs for Carbon Stewardship Practices

Applicant Support Webinar

Inflation Reduction Act (IRA): Forest Landowner Support

IRA provides the U.S. Forest Service \$450 million for Forest Landowner Support.

Funding intended to benefit rural non-Federal lands and landowners.

Programs implemented by the U.S. Forest Service's State, Private, and Tribal Forestry deputy area.

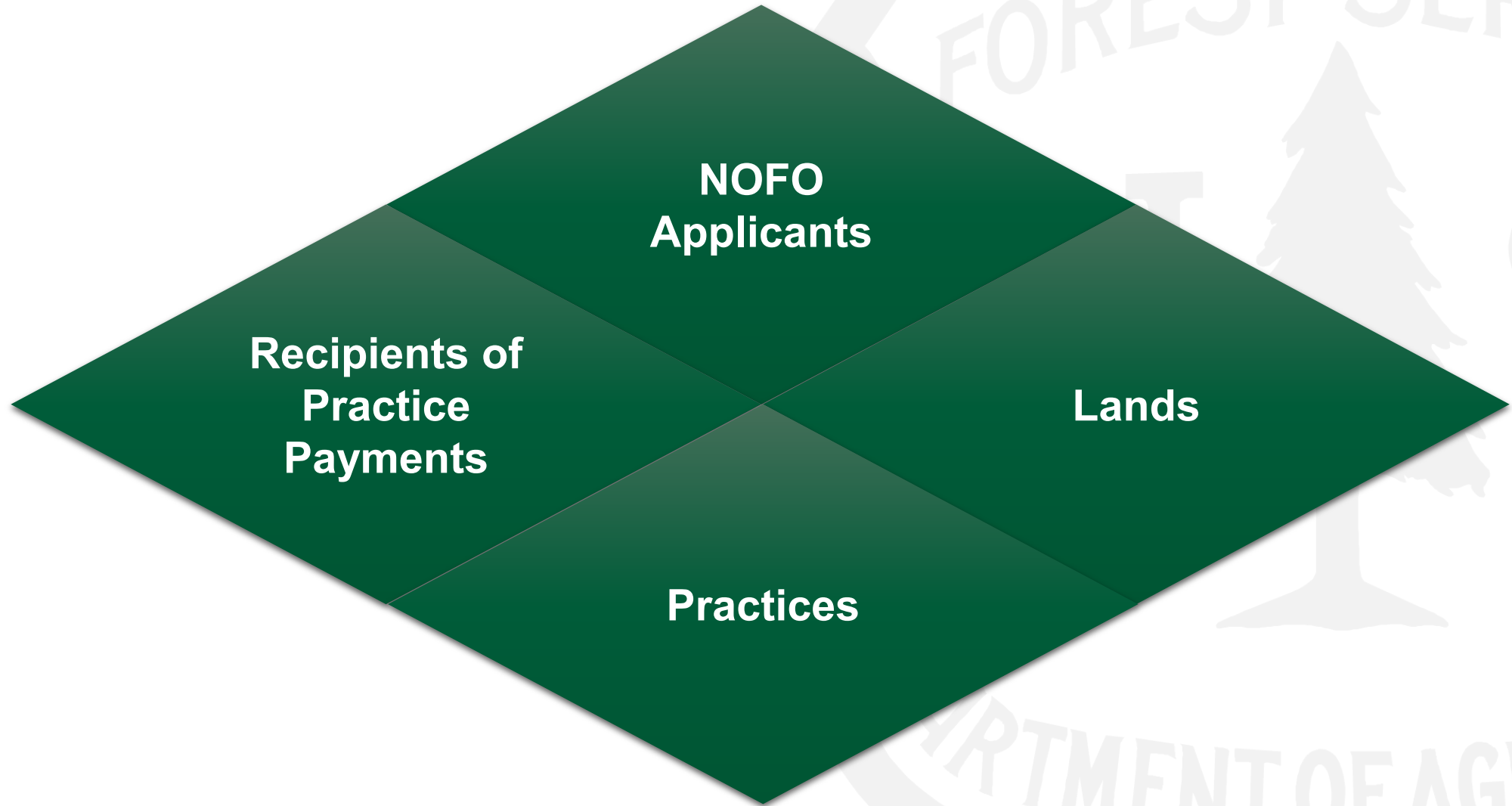


(USDA Forest Service photo by Nate Lowe)

Quick Facts

- Proposals are **due September 30, 2024**.
- Eligible applicants may request **up to \$5 million**.
- All proposed projects should **pay private forest landowners** to implement practices that drive **measurable increases in carbon sequestration and storage**.
- **20% match** requirement, with potential for reduction.
- Proposals must be **submitted via grants.gov**.

Eligibility



Eligibility: Applicants

Who Can Apply to this NOFO:

- State forestry agencies or their equivalents
- Nonprofit organizations



(USDA Forest Service photo by Preston Keres)

Eligibility: Recipients of Practice Payments

Private forest landowners are eligible to receive practice payments.

There are no acreage restrictions on landowners receiving practice payments.



(USDA Forest Service photo by Scott Ray)

Eligibility: Lands

Practices may be implemented on **private forest land**.

Land must also be:

- Rural,
- Forested (or able to grow trees), and
- Owned by an eligible recipient of practice payments.

Tribal land held in trust by the federal government on behalf of Tribes and individual Tribal members is eligible.



(USDA Forest Service photo by Preston Keres)

What are Carbon Stewardship Practices?

Carbon stewardship practices **enhance the carbon benefits** of forests while **sustaining a diversity of ecosystem services**.

The USDA Forest Service defines carbon stewardship as actions, informed by science, that provide for increased carbon uptake and storage or increased stabilization through land-use and vegetation management strategies.

Thoughtful carbon stewardship seeks to optimize carbon within the context of ecosystem integrity and climate adaptation, not to maximize carbon at the expense of forest health or habitat.

For more information on carbon stewardship and its significance in forest ecosystems, please visit:

www.fs.usda.gov/managing-land/sustainability-and-climate/carbon

Eligibility: Practices

Practices eligible for payments will be **determined by each applicant**. Practices should adhere to the requirements listed below:

1. Practices should lead to increased carbon sequestration and storage over time.
2. Increases in carbon sequestration and storage should be measurable.
3. Practices should support overall ecosystem health, rather than maximizing carbon sequestration and storage to the detriment of other benefits.
4. Practices should be designed for site-specific conditions.
5. Practices should be resilient to future changes in climate and weather conditions.
6. Practice implementation and maintenance should be feasible and cost-effective for applicants and the landowners whom they serve.

Table of Proposed Practices

Applicants should submit proposed practices and associated justifications using the table below. Applicants are encouraged to be **as specific as possible** when filling out this table.

Goal	Practice	Carbon Stewardship Rationale	Time to Carbon Benefit <i>(Estimated Range)</i>	Evidence for Carbon Benefit	Additional Considerations	Payment Rate <i>(Dollars per Acre)</i>

Practice Selection

Resources for identifying carbon stewardship practices aligned to applicant and landowner goals include:

- **The Adaptation Workbook:** a structured process for designing land management strategies that respond to the anticipated local impacts of climate change.

<https://adaptationworkbook.org/>

- **The Forest Carbon Management Menu:** a menu of strategies for enhancing the ability of a forest ecosystem to adapt to anticipated changes and sequester carbon into the future.

<https://forestadaptation.org/focus/forest-carbon-management>



(Forest Service photo by Gary Garner)

Ineligible Uses of Grant Funds

Please **review the ineligible uses of grant funds** listed in the NOFO.

Ineligible uses include:

- Construction and capital improvements, including but not limited to facilities, infrastructure, roads, buildings, culverts, dams, ponds, and major earthwork projects
- Land acquisition projects, including conservation easements
- Equipment purchases (rarely eligible)
- Lobbying, litigation, or political advocacy
- Basic research

Carbon Benefit Quantification

Applicants should **estimate the carbon benefits** associated with their projects.

In doing so, they are welcome to either...

A: Utilize the USDA Entity Guidelines Level 1 approach

- USDA recently updated its technical guidance on greenhouse gas accounting (the ‘Entity Guidelines’). www.usda.gov/oce/entity-scale-ghg-methods
- ‘Level 1’ of the Entity Guidelines offers a standardized, user-friendly approach for estimating carbon benefits from reforestation, avoided deforestation, extended rotation, and other management activities.
- An accompanying Excel workbook automates computation.

OR

B: Propose their own methodologies

- Applicant-proposed methodologies are welcome – and particularly important for those proposing to implement practices not covered by Entity Guidelines Level 1.
- A one-page methodology description should be submitted, including rationale, monitoring plan, data source(s), relevant literature, and point of contact.
- Methodologies will be reviewed by carbon experts from Forest Service R&D.

Project Design

The mechanics of practice payment projects are largely **at the discretion of the applicants.**

The NOFO lays out requirements and recommendations, including:

- At least 80 percent of funds should be reserved for practice payments to landowners.
- Up to 20 percent of funds may be used for administrative and project management costs.
- Applicants should determine appropriate payment rates for the practices that they intend to support.
- Implementation of proposed practices should be supported by an appropriate level of long-term planning.
- Partnerships that expand applicant capacity are strongly encouraged.

Match Contribution

- Required match from non-federal sources of 20 percent of total project cost.
- Requests for reduced match will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- A match waiver or reduction will be considered if:
 - At least 40 percent of landowners receiving payments are underserved *and/or*
 - At least 40 percent of acres benefiting from funded practices are owned by underserved landowners
- Waiver requests must include detailed plans for underserved landowner engagement and specific, data-driven projections of landowners to be reached.

Evaluation Criteria (Page 1 of 2)

1. The proposal articulates clear project goals that support the core purpose of this funding opportunity.
2. The proposal provides sufficient context to justify the proposed project, including an overview of relevant initiatives, as well as a description of target landowners and target geographies.
3. The project design is described in detail, aligns with goals, and indicates viability and potential to scale.
4. The proposal includes a detailed implementation plan that describes the operations and execution of the planned project.
5. Carbon stewardship practices are well described, with a clear rationale for each provided. Proposed practices are:
 - a. Aligned to the six Practice Requirements;
 - b. Supported by the best available science;
 - c. Well-suited to the target geography, including its specific climate vulnerabilities and mitigation potential; and
 - d. Innovative (not customarily implemented in target geographies/by target landowners).

Evaluation Criteria (Page 2 of 2)

6. The process for determining practice payment rates is clear, including consideration of implementation and maintenance costs.
7. The carbon benefit quantification methodology is well described and appropriate for the proposed practices and target geography. If the Entity Guidelines will be used, the proposed practices are covered by the Level 1 approach.
8. Reasonable carbon benefit estimates are provided at the requested intervals. The proposal identifies threats to achieving estimated carbon benefits and plans for responding to these threats.
9. The applicant either has the required capacity to implement the proposed project or clearly describes an achievable plan to build capacity to a sufficient level to implement the project.
10. Proposed partnerships are robust and demonstrate substantive involvement.

How to Apply: Required Documents

1. Cover Page
2. Proposal Narrative
3. Table of Proposed Practices
4. Detailed Budget
5. Budget Narrative
6. Letter(s) of Collaboration (if applicable)
7. Match Verification (if applicable)
8. Standard Forms 424 and 424A. These forms need not be submitted as separate attachments in Grants.gov, but rather are filled out and completed via Grants.gov.
9. Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA, if applicable)

How to Apply: SAM.gov & Grants.gov

Prepare to Apply

Register your organization with www.Sam.gov and make sure your registration is “active.” Take note of the assigned Unique Entity Identifier (UEI)

- Note that sam.gov registration can be tricky and it takes time to resolve any issues that arise

Create a Grants.gov account and add an organizational profile to the account using the UEI

- EBiz point of contact (POC) must log into Grants.gov and authorize the appropriate roles. The EBiz POC must also authorize people with the “AOR role”, which allows specific people to submit and sign applications.

Submit Application via Grants.gov

- 1) Create a Workspace
- 2) Submit an application through Workspace
- 3) Track a Workspace submission
- 4) Check for acknowledgment of application receipt and take note of tracking number (GRANTXXXXXXXX)

Application Support is Available



Office hours during the application period

Dates, times, and links posted to Forest Landowner Support webpage



FAQ document on Grants.gov

Updated as new questions come in from prospective applicants



Team-monitored inbox: sm.fs.landownerIRA@usda.gov



Grants.gov 24/7 support: 1-800-518-4726 or support@grants.gov

Thank You

