



Forest Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Landowner Support:

Landowner Cost Share Payment Programs for Climate Mitigation and/or Forest Resilience 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.

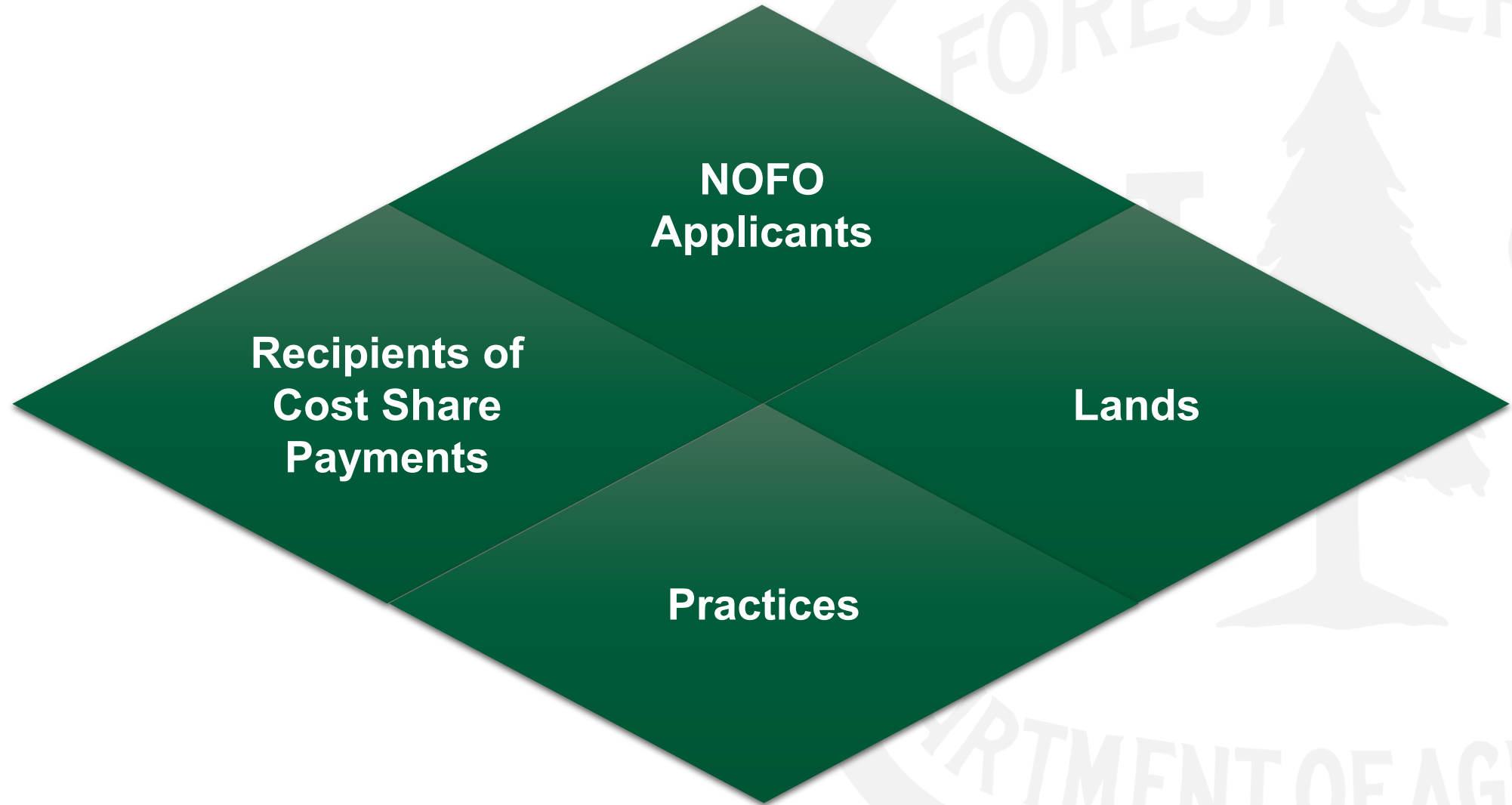


(USDA Forest Service photo by Nate Lowe)

Quick Facts

- Proposals are **due September 30, 2024.**
- Eligible applicants may request:
 - **up to \$5 million** for proposals operating within a single state
 - **up to \$15 million** for proposals operating across multiple states
- All proposed programs should issue cost share payments to landowners for **climate mitigation and/or forest resilience practices.**
- **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, institutions of higher learning, or units of local government *with a letter of endorsement from a State Forester(s)*



(USDA Forest Service photo by Preston Keres)

Role of State Forestry Agencies

The intention of the Forest Service is for cost share payment programs supported by this funding opportunity to be **operated by states, overseen by states, or endorsed by states.**

State Role	Description	Eligible NOFO Applicant(s)
Operate	Cost share program operated entirely by the state forestry agency. ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none">State forestry agency or its equivalent
Oversee	Cost share program overseen by the state forestry agency, with delivery components sub-awarded or contracted to other state agencies or partners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">State forestry agency or its equivalent
Endorse Non-State Led Application	Cost share administrator role performed by a non-state entity with written state endorsement and continued substantive state forestry agency coordination and engagement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Nonprofit organization²Institution of higher learning²Unit of local government²

¹ Multi-state applications will be considered; one state forestry agency must serve as the primary applicant.

² A non-state entity must include a letter of endorsement from a State Forester or their equivalent in its application.

Eligibility: Recipients of Cost Share Payments

Non-federal, non-industrial forest landowners, including:

- Individuals, groups, associations, corporations, or other private legal entities;
- Federally and state recognized Tribes, as well as equivalent governmental representatives of native indigenous communities; and
- Units of local government.



(USDA Forest Service photo by Scott Ray)

Eligibility: Lands

Cost share practices may be implemented on:

- Non-industrial private forest land (including Tribal trust lands);
- Forest land owned by a unit of local government; and
- Forest land held in trust for Native Hawaiians by the Department of HI Homelands and the Office of HI Affairs.

Land must also be:

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

Eligibility: Practices

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

1. Practices eligible should have a positive impact on climate mitigation and/or forest resilience.
2. Practices should support overall ecosystem health, rather than maximizing any single benefit to the detriment of others.
3. Practices should be designed for site-specific conditions.
4. Practices should be resilient to future changes in climate and weather conditions.
5. Practice implementation and maintenance should be feasible and cost-effective for applicants and the landowners whom they serve.

Table of Proposed Practices

Below is **just one example** of the type of practice that may support climate mitigation and forest resilience in a given geography and is offered for illustrative purposes.

Goal	Practice	Climate Mitigation Rationale	Forest Resilience Rationale	Evidence for Impact	Additional Considerations	Cost Share Rate
Restore vegetative cover in riparian areas to reduce flood impacts, enhance water quality, and provide habitat connectivity	Plant riparian buffer species such as red twig dogwood and willow to stabilize banks in coastal forests (Oregon)	Riparian planting and soil stabilization enhance carbon sequestration and storage in these flood-prone ecosystems	Forested riparian areas reduce soil erosion, buffer high flows, and regulate base flows relative to non-forest	Forested Watersheds Menu (practices described in approaches 4.1 and 4.2) ⁴ Oregon State University Extension ⁵	Must consider landform, hydrology, and recommended buffer widths	\$X per acre

Practice Selection

Resources for identifying climate mitigation and forest resilience practices aligned to state goals and landscape priorities 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

Cost Share Program Design

The mechanics of cost share payment programs are largely **at the discretion of the applicants**.

The NOFO lays out requirements and recommendations, including:

- These funds can support the creation of new cost share payment programs or bolster existing programs.
- At least 80 percent of funds should be reserved for cost share payments to landowners.
- Up to 20 percent of funds may be used for administrative and program management costs.
- Applicants should determine cost share rates for the practices that they intend to support.
- Partnerships that expand applicant capacity are strongly encouraged.
- Program and payment structures that support underserved landowner participation in cost share programs 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 cost share 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 program goals and ties these goals to both state priorities (e.g., state forest action plan) and USDA Forest Service priorities, including landscape-scale strategies.
2. The proposal provides sufficient context to justify the proposed cost share program, including an overview of relevant applicant initiatives and a description of the target geography and its climate vulnerabilities.
3. The structure and mechanics of the cost share program are described in detail, align with state program goals, and indicate program viability.
4. The proposal includes a detailed implementation plan that describes the operations and execution of the planned cost share program.
5. Climate mitigation and forest resilience practices are well described, with a clear rationale for each provided. Proposed practices are:
 - a. Aligned to the five Practice Requirements;
 - b. Well-suited to the target geography and its specific climate vulnerabilities;
 - c. Tied to state forestry agency goals, including those put forward in state forest action plan; and
 - d. Supported by relevant literature, case studies, pilot projects, etc.

Evaluation Criteria (Page 2 of 2)

6. The proposed cost share program effectively targets underserved landowners. *Targeting underserved landowners is not a program requirement; however, proposals that plan for effective underserved landowner engagement will receive special consideration.*
7. The applicant either has the required capacity to implement the proposed cost share program or clearly describes an achievable plan to build agency capacity to a sufficient level to implement the program.
8. Proposed partnerships are diverse and engage the core capabilities and talents of respective partners. Letters of collaboration indicate substantive involvement.
9. State forestry agencies have been provided the opportunity to offer meaningful input on the proposal to support cost share program design, coordination, and delivery.

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 State Endorsement (if applicable)
7. Letter(s) of Collaboration (if applicable)
8. Match Verification (if applicable)
9. 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.
10. 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

