

**USDA Forest Service Southern Region State and Private Forestry  
FY2024**

**State Fire Capacity Hazard Mitigation Grant**

**Applications Due 11:59 pm Eastern Time Zone January 15, 2024**

**All non-State Forestry Agency applications (except Tribes) must have a letter of support from the State Forestry Agency when submitting in Grants.gov.**

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**Purpose**

State Fire Capacity (SFC) Hazard Mitigation priorities are consistent with the goals of the [National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy](https://forestsandrangelands.gov/strategy/thestrategy.shtml) (<https://forestsandrangelands.gov/strategy/thestrategy.shtml>), specifically as listed below.

1. **Restore and Maintain Landscapes:** Landscapes across all jurisdictions are resilient to fire-related disturbances, in accordance with management objectives.
2. **Create Fire Adapted Communities:** Human populations and infrastructure can withstand a wildfire without loss of life or property.

Additionally, SFC priorities reflect the national USFS priorities of improving the condition of forests, and grasslands, promoting shared stewardship by increasing partnerships and volunteerism, and by being good neighbors and providing excellent customer service.

SFC Hazard Mitigation application activities should clearly focus on identifying and creating fire adapted communities by:

- Reducing hazardous fuels in the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI)
- Developing, and implementing Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPPs)
- Providing prevention and mitigation education, and/or
- By achieving Fire Adapted Community and Firewise programming and other community hazard mitigation activities.

An emphasis should be placed on funding areas that have developed or are developing CWPPs, FEMA hazard mitigation plans, or other collaboratively developed hazard mitigation plans.

Hazard Mitigation Funding: SFC– Mitigation is distributed through a competitive grant process and in accordance with the National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy, Southern Group of State Foresters’ Strategic Implementation Plan, State Forest Action Plans, and US Forest Service National and Regional Priorities.

Successful **SFC-Mitigation Grants** applications will clearly identify the reduction of wildfire risk and will align with the respective State’s Forest Action Plan. The current plans are available on the National Association of State Foresters [State Forest Action Plans](https://www.stateforesters.org/forest-action-plans/) at <https://www.stateforesters.org/forest-action-plans/>.

### **General Grant Criteria:**

- Projects must be for a qualifying activity - if it is not, the application will be considered ineligible. See Appendix A for examples of eligible and ineligible projects.
- Applicant must meet the 1:1 cost-share match requirement - if not the application will be considered ineligible.
  - The cost-share match can be in the form of a cash or in-kind contribution.
  - A cash match cannot be utilized from other federal funding.
- Funds cannot be used on federal lands, excluding Tribal trust lands.
- Each State can have a maximum of two internal and two external applications.
  - Internal for this grant is defined as the State Forestry Agency.
  - External for this grant is defined as other State Agencies, County/Local governments, or other Non-governmental Organizations (including private landowner associations such as HOAs).
    - For profit entities are not eligible.
  - Tribal entities are separate, not considered external, and tribal applications will not count toward a State maximum number of applications.
- State Forestry Agencies may support up to two external applications.
  - External applicants (except for Tribes) must submit applications to the State Forestry Agency for review and potential State Forester support. See Appendix C for State Forestry Agency Contacts.
  - External applications must be submitted to the appropriate State Forestry Agency no later than **December 15, 2023**.
  - External applicants with supported proposals will be provided a letter of support from the State Forester which must be submitted along with the application in Grants.gov.
  - Projects awarded to external applicants (excluding tribes) will receive funding as a pass-through grant from the applicable State Forestry Agency.
  - Supported external applicants should work with the applicable State Forestry Agency to determine if any Indirect Costs will need to be accounted for within their grant application.
- Tribes will submit applications directly in Grants.gov.
  - Tribal projects will be scored with all other applications. However, Tribal applications will not count towards the state cap of four (4) and will instead be limited to two (2) Tribal applications per state.

- If a Tribal project is selected for funding through this process, the USDA Forest Service Southern Region will work directly with the Tribe on the grant award.
- Equipment purchases \$5000 or more will require:
  - Grant Equipment Justification Form,
  - Detailed information within the application supporting the need and use of equipment.

### **Eligible applicants**

- State Forestry Agencies
- Groups of States
- Tribes
- Nonprofit organizations
- Academic Institutions
- Local government representing communities located within a designated WUI area
- Non-profit organizations such as local conservation districts that assist communities
- Private landowners and associations
- Rx fire training academies

### **Timeline**

All applicants must apply in grants.gov by 11:59 pm Eastern Time Zone on **January 15, 2024**.

The Request for Applications (RFA) will open in Grants.gov **November 13, 2023**, and close at 11:59 pm Eastern Time Zone on **January 15, 2024**. See Appendix B for instructions on applying through Grants.gov.

- External applicants must submit draft applications to the appropriate State Forestry agency by **December 15, 2023**.
- State Forestry Agencies will review external applications, prioritize, and may provide a letter of support to no more than 2 external applicants by **January 5, 2024**.
- External applicants (excluding Tribes) must submit State Forester Letter of Support with their application.

### **Funding and Grant Term**

- Funding for this State Fire Capacity (SFC) Hazard Mitigation grant is not guaranteed. Funding amount will be determined once Congress allocates a budget to USDA Forest Service.
- The minimum/ maximum project amount is between \$25,000-\$300,000.
- The maximum amount of grant funding awarded to any one state for this grant cannot exceed 15% of the total funding available for the RFA.
- Funding amount for FY24 is unknown and not guaranteed. Using the FY2023 funding allocation, the 15% cap for FY2023 was \$838,851.00.
- Grants to Tribes will not affect the 15% state cap.
- Multistate applications must identify the lead agency and the amount of funds to be allocated against each states cap in the project budget explanation.
- All applications will be reviewed and ranked in their entirety. Once the top ranked applications are fully funded, remaining funds will be offered to the next ranked application. That next ranked applicant will be given the opportunity to receive the remaining available funds if they can increase their match component to fully fund and implement the project that was competed. If that applicant is unable to increase match funds to fully fund and implement the

original, competed project and declines the reduced grant amount, the same offer will be extended to the next ranked application.

- If combined applications from the same state exceed the 15% cap, the lowest ranked application from that state will be given the opportunity to receive partial grant funding up to the 15% cap if the receiving entity can fund the full project using additional match funds. If they are unable to increase match funds to fund the full project with a reduced grant amount, the same offer will be extended to the next ranked application.
- The grant term is three (3) years, with one-year extensions possible for unique circumstances, for a total maximum term of (5) years.

### **Application Requirements:**

- SFC-Mitigation Grants funds must be matched 100% or more (1:1) by eligible and allowable costs and are subject to match provisions in [grant regulations in the Electronic Code of Federal Regulations](https://www.ecfr.gov/) located at <https://www.ecfr.gov/>.
- Requested grant funds must be an appropriate and authorized use of Federal funds as described in [The Principal Laws Relating to USDA Forest Service State and Private Forestry Programs](https://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/stelprdb5315811.pdf), SEC. 10. [16 U.S.C. 2106] RURAL FIRE PREVENTION AND CONTROL, which can be found at [https://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE\\_DOCUMENTS/stelprdb5315811.pdf](https://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/stelprdb5315811.pdf).

### **Instructions for completing Applications:**

- Applicants other than the State Forestry Agency (excluding Tribes) must have a letter of support from the appropriate State Forester to apply in Grants.gov.
- Applications must include the following information, but **content should be confined to a 3520-character limit for each section**. Applicants may choose to use the provided application narrative form and Worksheet A, B, C to ensure all required information is provided.
- Applicant Information:
  - Provide the Name of the Applicant Organization and specific contact information.
  - List the state(s) in which the project will occur.
- Project Information:
  - The title of the project should reflect the primary purpose of the project and any unique geographical reference (ex. Albany County Fuels Reduction Project, etc.).
  - Identify the county or counties in which the projects will occur.
  - Identify the Federal Congressional District.
- GIS coordinates – use either a reference point or an area to identify the project location. All lat/longs should be in Decimal Degrees format (e.g., 39.000, -104.300).
  - Reference Point - This can be used for indicating a specific project or community.
    - Name – specific project name,
    - Lat/Long - should be a central point for the specific project,
    - Description – include the names of any CWPPS, Firewise Communities, and/or other communities benefitting from the project, including those benefitting from prevention education programs.
  - Area - This can be used to indicate multiple projects and/or multiple communities within a defined geographic area.

- Name – name of generalized geographic area,
  - Lat/Long – include lat/longs to indicate boundaries,
  - Description - information should include sufficient information to define the area/community and should include location of CWPPs (consider 100% of county), name or location of Firewise Communities, and/or other communities benefitting from the project(s), including those benefitting from prevention education programs.
- Project Area Description and Challenges:
  - Applicants must give an overview of the project area, identify the hazards that exist and clearly show the need for work in this area.
  - In detail, specifically describe challenges or obstacles that will need to be addressed for the project to be successful.
  - If applying for a fuels reduction project, describe the fuel/vegetation types.
- Proposed Activities and Accomplishments:
  - Include a detailed description of the project that includes describing the hazards, or prevention education/ mitigation activities, and clearly detailing the need for the requested funding.
  - Clearly describe each proposed activity and include details on where they will be occurring.
  - For Outreach/Prevention projects- include three main points (education, commitment, and monitoring).
    - Include how outreach/education/prevention materials will be distributed and indicate what the commitment is over time.
    - For monitoring purposes, the application should describe how the outreach will be sustained and updated over the course of time.
  - For CWPP or Hazard Mitigation Plan Planning/ Assessment/ Monitoring purposes include three main points (education, commitment, and monitoring).
    - Include how outreach/education activities will be conducted.
    - Include how the plans will be implemented and what the commitment is over time.
    - For monitoring purposes, the application should describe how plans will be sustained and updated over the course of time.
  - Include Proposed Accomplishments based on the table provided in the optional narrative form and add any project accomplishments not already listed.
- Value Added on the Ground, Community, etc.:
  - Clearly describe how the project improves the landscape and surrounding communities and how it may relate to other mitigation projects.
- Project Timelines:
  - Project timeline that includes the beginning and ending dates with milestones and specific targets completed at specific times.
- Project Collaboration:
  - Clearly describe any contributions the grantee and partners will make to the project.
  - Include the partners who are contributing to the matching share.

- Also include federal and other partners that are contributing to the project even if they are ineligible for use as match.
- Connection to State Forest Action Plan and CWPP(s):
  - Clearly describe how the project connects or relates to the State Forest Action Plan, specifically how it fits into the goals of the Cohesive Strategy.
  - Clearly describe how the project implements recommendations set forth in an applicable CWPP/hazard mitigation plan.
- Project Sustainability:
  - Discuss in detail how the project will be maintained over time to remain effective.
  - For Fuels Treatments:
    - Describe who is responsible for maintenance, duration, and if any processes or long-term plans are in place to support the project after grant funding is expended.
    - Describe mechanisms which strengthen maintenance beyond the life of the grant (landowner agreement, HOA or municipal regulations, technical support from local agencies).
  - For Outreach and Education:
    - Describe how outreach/education/prevention activities be conducted and materials be distributed.
    - Describe how outreach/education/prevention will be sustained and updated over the course of time.
  - For CWPPs:
    - Discuss how CWPP will be used over time.
- Assistance to Underserved Communities:
  - Describe your outreach activities and assistance to underserved communities in support of Executive Order 13985: Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government.
  - Points are awarded for applications that show a clear, meaningful benefit to or engagement with underserved communities/people.
  - Uses National, State, or local data tools support the underserved areas in which funds will be prioritized. Tools may include, but are not limited to: Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (<https://screeningtool.geoplatform.gov/en/>), CDC/ATSDR Social Vulnerability Index ([https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/placeandhealth/svi/interactive\\_map.html](https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/placeandhealth/svi/interactive_map.html)), the CWDG Data Dashboard for (<https://wildfirerisk.org/cwdg-tool>).
- Budget Narrative:
  - Describe how grant funds will be spent with specific details, and quantities for each grant expenditure.
  - Provide clear and concise explanation for each budget line item and its function within the project.
- Budget Tables:
  - List the expenditures required to complete the proposed project. Expenditures should be listed in detail under the following categories:
    - Personnel

- Fringe Benefits
- Travel
- Equipment
- Supplies
- Contractual
- Other Expenses
- Indirect Costs
- Applicants may choose to use the provided Worksheet A, B, C.
- Equipment is any item costing \$5000 or more.
- Adequately document the Supplies needed to complete the project
  - 2 CFR requires that the use of funds “Be necessary and reasonable for the performance” and “Be adequately documented”.
- Cost share match. The match can include training hours, volunteer hours, donated labor/equipment, etc. An actual cash match cannot include federal funds.

### Scoring Criteria

All applications will undergo a review, eligibility, and ranking process by the established Southern Area Hazard Mitigation Grant Review Committee. The rubric below is the guidance the review committee will use to assign scores to each section of the application based on the type of projects the application includes.

All project applications will be screened and evaluated based on the following Scoring Criteria. Only full point scores will be assigned. The maximum total score any one application can receive is 100.

All applicants will be notified of the final selection or non-selection of their applications.

Project Area Description and Challenges	15-20 pts – High	8-14 pts – Medium	1-7 pts – Low
<b>General</b>	Provides well-written introduction of the project area, project type, and why need exists in the area.	Applicant describes project area and project type but misses one or two elements such as fuel type, hazards, challenges, or need for project work.	Poorly written project area description; does not include issues/problems or challenges facing the project area; does not clearly exhibit the need for the project.
<b>Fuels</b>	Narrative clearly captures fuel type/vegetation, specific hazards, and challenges the project seeks to address. Project will reduce hazardous fuels in WUI communities or in a landscape that if affected by fire, would adversely impact the community.		
<b>Outreach/Prevention</b>	Outreach/prevention activities (if any) are relevant to the project and clearly describe how outreach is addressing challenges that are impacting current efforts.	Outreach/prevention activities are outlined but does not clearly address challenges.	Mentioned but not specifically described.
<b>CWPP, Planning, Assessment, Monitoring</b>	CWPP activities (if any) are relevant to the project and described.		

	General results of planning efforts are described.	Objective and goals of CWPP activities are not clear.	Mentioned but not specifically described.
<b>Proposed Activities</b>	<b>15-20 pts – High</b>	<b>8-14 pts – Medium</b>	<b>1-7 pts – Low</b>
<p><b>General</b></p>	<p>Applicant provides a clear and well-organized narrative that explains the activities (fuels, cost-share, outreach, prevention, planning) to take place and how they will be completed (e.g., scope of work or prescription). Narrative is target and metric-oriented and lists specific deliverables corresponding to each activity. Narrative demonstrates that activities have been planned with forethought, during preparation of the application. Describes project activities and how grant funds and leveraged resources (not match) will be used.</p>	<p>Missing a key metric that would logically be assumed with specific activities or describes project activities and how grant funds and leveraged resources will be used but lacks detail. Project deliverables and outputs are described, though how success is measured for one or two activities is unclear. For lower range of medium-tier scores, narrative provides specific activities, but outcomes are vague.</p>	<p>Insufficient detail is provided as to what work will be completed using grant funds and leveraged resources (not match). Does not include measurable elements, how many acres to be mitigated, what was being mitigated, or how the proposed activities were being completed. Poorly written.</p>
<p><b>Fuels Projects</b> Not all sample deliverables need to be present. Applicant should use the appropriate metric in describing the project.</p>	<p><b>Sample deliverables for fuels projects:</b> Acres, fuel break size, what vegetation is being removed, target dbh for removal, tree crown spacing etc., method of treatment (via handwork, mechanical treatment etc.).</p>		
<p><b>Outreach/Prevention</b> Not all sample deliverables need to be present. Applicant should use the appropriate metric in describing the project.</p>	<p><b>Sample Deliverables for education/prevention projects:</b> Describe who will be targeted (communities, schools, etc.), how many will be targeted and the need for education/ outreach and include the use of established fire program elements (Firewise, community outreach prevention programs, Living with Fire, defensible space etc.); project should also describe the use of workshops, presentations, handouts, and brochures etc.</p>		
<p><b>CWPP, Planning, Assessment, Monitoring</b> <i>Not</i> all sample deliverables need to be present. Applicant should use the appropriate</p>	<p><b>Sample Deliverables for CWPP Update Projects:</b> Clearly describe accomplishments to this point (for new CWPP's, demonstrate need), opportunities for collaboration, goals of fuels reduction priorities,</p>		

metric in describing the project.	how structural ignitability will be addressed. The development of new CWPP also satisfies these criteria.		
<b>Value added on the ground, community, etc.</b>	<b>5 pts – High</b>	<b>3-4 pts – Medium</b>	<b>1-2 pts - Low</b>
<b>General</b>	Well-written: Narrative clearly demonstrates forethought given to project location, orientation and/or scope/magnitude of positive impact on a landscape/community beyond the defined project area.  Explain how the project complements or enhances those projects by other agencies or groups and ties into a greater landscape or community goals, and how it impacts past, current, and future projects.	Landscape level activities or community reach are described in general or other nearby projects are listed, but it is not clear how or why the project complements directly at a landscape or community level.	Narrative not clearly written; key descriptions of landscape community level activities, and overall project impact are absent.
<b>Project Timeline</b>	<b>8-10 pts – High</b>	<b>5-7 pts – Medium</b>	<b>1-4 pts - Low</b>
<b>General</b>	Project timeline is organized and has clearly established beginning and end dates, lists project milestones, and identifies specific targets completed at specific times.	Organized as an easy-to-follow timeline of events but missing one or two required elements such as milestones or accomplishment markers.	Provides beginning and end dates, but no milestones or timeline of specific deliverables.
<b>Project Collaboration</b>	<b>8-10 pts – High</b>	<b>5-7 pts – Medium</b>	<b>1-4 pts - Low</b>
<b>General</b>	All partner project contributions are listed and described as relevant to project success. Narrative clearly demonstrates commitment from interested parties, and/or on-going multi-partner collaboration.	Lists partners and contributions, but specific roles are unclear or lacking detail and unclear.	Very little or no collaboration appears to exist. The project does not appear to have a collaborative impact.
<b>Connection to State Forest Action Plan and CWPP(s)</b>	<b>8-10 pts – High</b>	<b>5-7 pts – Medium</b>	<b>1-4 pts - Low</b>
<b>General</b>	Clearly describes specific goals of CWPP and FAP and how project elements/scope integrate those goals. Narrative well written and organized. If no CWPP exists, project discusses CWPP development and relation to the FAP.	Covers required elements but does not explicitly or clearly describe relation of the project to FAP and CWPP.	Poorly written. Does not include how this project fits into the broad goals of the FAP or how it meets the

<b>Outreach/Education</b>	Outreach/education activities (if any) are relevant to the project and described <i>clearly</i> , and the general impact of education/outreach addresses CWPP and FAP goals impacting current efforts.	Outreach/education activities are outlined but does not clearly address challenges.	goals and objectives of a CWPP. Mentioned but not specifically described.
<b>CWPP, Planning, Assessment, Monitoring</b>	CWPP activities (if any) are relevant to the project and described. General results of planning efforts are described.	Objective and goals of CWPP not clear.	Mentioned but not specifically described.
<b>Project Sustainability</b>	<b>8-10 pts – High</b>	<b>5-7 pts – Medium</b>	<b>1-4 pts - Low</b>
<b>General</b>	Narrative is well-written clearly shows that items described have been planned in advance and/or have had past success.	Missing key details or specificity of how the project will be maintained beyond the life of the grant, but is otherwise well written, detailed, and descriptive.	Omits multiple details on how the project will be sustained, and/or is poorly detailed and unclear. No mention of how the project will benefit beyond the life of the grant.
<b>Fuels</b>	Describes who is responsible for maintenance, duration, and if any processes or long-term plans are in place to support the project after grant funding is expended. Includes the mechanisms by which the maintenance will occur beyond life of the grant (i.e., landowner agreement, HOA or municipal regulations, technical support from local agencies).		
<b>Outreach/Education</b>	Fully describes how outreach and education will be sustained and updated over the course of time.		
<b>CWPP, Planning, Assessment, Monitoring</b>	Describes how CWPP will be used over time.		
<b>Assistance to Underserved Communities</b>	<b>8-10 pts – High</b>	<b>6-7 pts – Medium</b>	<b>1-5 pts - Low</b>
<b>General</b>	The application fully describes how outreach and assistance to underserved communities will be accomplished. Uses National, State, or local data tools support the underserved areas in which funds will be prioritized.	Missing key details or specificity of how outreach and assistance to underserved communities will be accomplished.	Poorly detailed and unclear.
<b>Budget Narrative and Worksheet A, B, C</b>	<b>5 pts – High</b>	<b>3-4 pts – Medium</b>	<b>1-2 pts - Low</b>

<b>General</b>	Well-written: Budget is complete, easy to understand, and budget items are clearly labeled. Narrative provides clear and concise explanation of each budget line item and its function within the project. Detailed budget narrative accurately compliments the Worksheet A, B, C.	Budget items are present, detailed and align with the budget table above, <i>but</i> one or more <i>budget narrative</i> line items lacks explanation and function within project.	Major errors in budget calculations. Expenditures and budget line-item functions are unclear. Poorly written.
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**Annual Accomplishment Reporting:**

For each federal Fiscal Year, annual accomplishment reports for all grants will be submitted by **November 15th**. Reports will include accomplishments of goals, objectives and other deliverables that were funded with this grant.

The State Forestry Agency will report all internal and external grantee data through the National Fire Plan Operating Reporting System (NFPORS) (<https://www.nfpors.gov>), Fire and Aviation Management Web (FAMweb) (<http://famweb.nwcg.gov/>) by **October 30<sup>th</sup> of each year of the grant**.

- External annual Fiscal Year (FY) accomplishment reporting must be submitted to the supporting State Forestry Agency. The supporting State Forestry Agency will enter and/or report annual required data reporting information for external grant holders.

For Tribal applicant awardees, the R8 Cooperative Fire Program Manager will report grantee data through the National Fire Plan Operating Reporting System (NFPORS) (<https://www.nfpors.gov>), Fire and Aviation Management Web (FAMweb) (<http://famweb.nwcg.gov/>) by **October 30<sup>th</sup>**.

## **Appendix A: State Fire Capacity (SFC) Hazard Mitigation Activity Examples (not all inclusive):**

### **Eligible:**

- Defensible space around communities, homes, and structures
- Development, creation, and/or maintenance of fuel breaks and fire breaks, including shaded fuel breaks
- Fuels reduction beyond defensible space adjacent to WUI areas
- Removal of slash including piling and burning; mulching; grinding; etc.
- State or federally recognized training programs that support the use of prescribed fire or Fire Adapted Communities (FAC)
- Mechanical fuel reduction
- Vegetation management (pruning, mowing, chemical treatment, grazing)
- Thinning
- Use of small diameter wood from wildfire risk reduction activities
- Maintenance of non-federally funded fuels projects
- Monitoring components for projects effectiveness; must have established baseline presented in application process. Monitoring of a project to ensure the continuous reduction for wildfire threat, achieving baseline conditions
- Firewise or similar programs outreach to WUI communities and homeowners
- Fire education presentation from Project Learning Tree
- Property inspections and/or assessments
- Exercises/drills that support local FAC
- Technical assistance as it relates to mitigation and hazardous fuels reduction activities
- Hazard Mitigation Program Management
- Pamphlets, brochures, handouts, PSAs, and DVDs
- Information and Education, Awareness, Firewise, Ready Set Go, and Fire Prevention Programs
- Installation of dry hydrants that support a FAC
- Fire management planning for fire adapted landscapes in FAC
- Creation/ development and implementation of Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPP) (or equivalent)
- Updating of CWPP/ hazard mitigation plans or equivalent document (over five (5) years old). *Note- If applying for funds to update an existing CWPP be sure to address the following in your application:*
  - Accomplishments: Explain what projects identified in the CWPP have been completed
  - Collaboration: Identify new partners and interested parties along with updated contact information
  - Prioritized Fuel Reduction: Identify and prioritize new hazardous fuels reduction projects, the method of treatments to be employed, and how these projects address

any changes to the community objectives and values at risk

- Treatment of Structural Ignitability: Explain new or additional measures to be implemented to reduce homeowner and/or community ignitability of structures

**Ineligible:**

- Research and development projects
- Capital improvements including construction/infrastructure (building remodel, bridges, road construction, water development)
- Economic development projects
- Training for suppression capacity building
- Preparedness and suppression capacity building, such as purchase of fire department equipment
- Small business start-up funding
- GIS/ database systems unless support a regional NASF initiative/ project

## Appendix B – Instructions for Submitting Applications in Grants.gov

Submit all applications for this funding opportunity through Grants.gov. Search for grant Opportunity Number **USDA-FS-2024-0831-MITIGATION**. Applicants submit your application to Grants.gov by 11:59 pm, Eastern Time Zone, **January 15, 2024**. 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](mailto:support@grants.gov).

### Registering in Grants.gov:

To apply for grants, organizations must have:

- An UEI Number
- Be active in the System for Award Management (SAM)
- A Grants.gov account

Creating a Grants.gov account can be completed online in minutes, but **UEI and SAM registrations may take several weeks or more to complete**. Therefore, ensure you apply for your UEI and SAM registration well in advance of applying for grants.

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

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

1. [Register with SAM](#): All organizations must register with the System for Award Management (SAM), and SAM registration must be renewed annually.
2. [Register with Grants.gov](#)
3. [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 UEI Number for the organization in the UEI field while adding a profile.
4. [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.
5. [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.

### Submitting an Application in 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. Forms must be completed in Workspace.**

Below is an overview of applying on Grants.gov. For access to complete instructions on how to apply for opportunities, refer to: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/workspace-overview.html>

- a. **Create a Workspace:** 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 all 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. As you apply using Workspace, you may click the blue question mark icon near the upper-right corner of each page to access context-sensitive help.

- 1) **Adobe Reader:** 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 storage, network drive(s), or external drives, then accessed through Adobe Reader.

**NOTE:** Visit the Adobe Software Compatibility page on Grants.gov to download the appropriate version of the software at:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/adobe-software-compatibility.html>

- 2) **Mandatory Fields in Forms:** In the forms, you will note fields marked with an asterisk and a different background color. These fields are mandatory fields that must be completed to successfully submit your application.
  - 3) **Complete SF-424 Fields First:** The forms are designed to fill in common required fields across other forms, such as the applicant's name, address, and UEI Number. Once completed, information will transfer to the other forms.
- c. **Submit a Workspace:** An application may be submitted 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 will be 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.

### **Timely Receipt Requirements and Proof of Timely Submission:**

All applications must be received by 11:59 pm, Eastern Time Zone on the **January 15, 2024**. 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 (GRANT#####) 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 this grant will be considered late and will not be considered for funding.

Applicants using slow internet should be aware that transmission can take some time before Grants.gov receives your application. 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 C – State Forestry Agency Contacts**

Alabama Forestry Commission: [John.Goff@forestry.alabama.gov](mailto:John.Goff@forestry.alabama.gov)

Arkansas Department of Agriculture - Forestry Division: [robert.d.murphy@agriculture.arkansas.gov](mailto:robert.d.murphy@agriculture.arkansas.gov)

Florida Forest Service: [John.Raulerson@fdacs.gov](mailto:John.Raulerson@fdacs.gov)

Georgia Forestry Commission: [fsorrells@gfc.state.ga.us](mailto:fsorrells@gfc.state.ga.us)

Kentucky Division of Forestry: [Michael.Froelich@ky.gov](mailto:Michael.Froelich@ky.gov)

Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry: [mpolk@ldaf.state.la.us](mailto:mpolk@ldaf.state.la.us)

Mississippi Forestry Commission: [rgiachelli@mfc.ms.gov](mailto:rgiachelli@mfc.ms.gov)

North Carolina Forest Service: [gail.bledsoe@ncagr.gov](mailto:gail.bledsoe@ncagr.gov)

Oklahoma Forestry Services: [Andy.James@ag.ok.gov](mailto:Andy.James@ag.ok.gov)

South Carolina Forestry Commission: [djones@scfc.gov](mailto:djones@scfc.gov)

Tennessee Department of Agriculture - Division of Forestry: [wade.waters@tn.gov](mailto:wade.waters@tn.gov)

Texas A&M Forest Service: [WMoorehead@tfs.tamu.edu](mailto:WMoorehead@tfs.tamu.edu)

Virginia Department of Forestry: [john.miller@dof.virginia.gov](mailto:john.miller@dof.virginia.gov)