

## Proposal Application Review and Selection Process

Please factor the included updated Cost-Share Practices and Rates into budgets for fuels reduction projects. These are State-wide rates for approved practices for reimbursing any cost-share fuels mitigation projects in the State of Wyoming through this program.

Proposal applications will be scored and ranked by an in-state interagency selection committee based on criteria as defined by the Western States Fire Managers selection committee (see attached "FY\_2020 WSFM WUI Grant Instruction to States\_Web") and additional state-specific evaluation criteria, which is outlined below.

### **Continued for 2020 Proposal Applications:**

WSFD will no longer bundle applications geographically. Agencies will stand alone on one application except those that have been submitted originally to WSFD to include more than one agency and geographic jurisdiction.

As the CWSF Wildland Urban Interface Competitive Grant system has become on-line based, all 2020 applications will be submitted through an online portal if recommended for funding from the in-state interagency selection committee.

Each State Agency has the ability to allow Cooperators to complete and submit an on-line WUI Grant Proposal to the State Agency. Identified as the WUI Grant Cooperator Submission System (CSS), the addition reduces the need for the State Agency to undertake the 'uploading' of each individual proposal. Cooperators will be responsible for typing in their proposals and providing the necessary information for the State Agency to take action.

WSFD believes the use of the CSS will streamline the process of submitting proposal applications as the fire season progresses into the late summer months. As WSFD and Cooperators use this on-line system, there are several important points to note:

- The State Agency must administer the CSS. This includes setting up a unique link for each application Cooperators plan to submit once recommend for funding at the state level. If a Cooperator wishes to submit more than one application, a unique link will be required for each one.
- The online applications that a Cooperator develops uses a form identical to the application form (PDF) but is not directly submitted as a final application. The State Administrator must take action to move the proposal from the CSS to the actual submission portal for the proposal to become one of the State's applications.
- A Cooperator does not need a login or password, as the State Administrator will provide a unique link to the Cooperator to use the CSS, which will be emailed directly to the Cooperator.
- Useful Definitions:
  - **Cooperator:** an organization that is submitting a proposal to the State Agency for consideration as an application from the State Agency to the WUI grant process.
  - **Proposal:** the project information submitted to the State Agency for consideration.
  - **Applicant:** the State or Pacific Island agency member of the Council of Western State Foresters. The only agency eligible to submit an application to the WUI grant process.
  - **Application:** the application that is submitted by the agency to the WUI grant process. The application must comply with the guidelines and instructions.

**If interested in submitting a proposal to WSFD,** please use the PDF version of the application to develop a draft of the proposal following the State Evaluation Criteria below, as well as the guidelines listed in the "FY\_2020 WSFM WUI Grant Instruction to States\_Web." This draft will be evaluated by

the in-state interagency selection committee. When Cooperators feel it is ready to be considered and reviewed by the committee, please notify WSFD via email with the draft application attached. If your application is recommended for funding by the in-state interagency selection committee, WSFD will then create the unique link that will be directly emailed to the Cooperator.

Once the link is received:

- Cooperators must fill out all fields before submitting their proposal. If you wish to leave something blank for the State to fill out, please enter "xxxxx." Fill out and then "Update Proposal." Simply scroll through to complete the sections.
- As the proposal is filled out, Cooperators should click "update" after each section is completed to save it. UPDATE OFTEN! Clicking on "update" will automatically sum the numbers in the budget section and autofill the funding request and match fields. Always "update" before exiting the session or going on to another section of the proposal. It is also recommended to check the budget numbers as there have been issues in the past. The proposal can be returned to by **saving the link and clicking on it again.**
- As a Cooperator, save and print the proposal before submitting it to WSFD. Review and save the proposal before submitting. Right click and print as a hard copy or save as a pdf. SAVE YOUR PROPOSAL! If there is a discrepancy in what a Cooperator thinks was submitted and what is actually on-line, the saved document is the only check we have.
- Submission: Hover over "Actions" near the top of the page. This gives the options to "Submit" or "Delete" the proposal application. The portal will only allow Cooperators to submit if all the sections are filled out. There will be one chance to cancel the submission of an application that will be prompted by a dialog box.
- **Once a proposal is submitted by a Cooperator to WSFD, the link is no longer valid and cannot be viewed by the Cooperator.**

#### **Timeline for 2020 Applications:**

1. Cooperators must submit draft proposal applications, via email, to WSFD by **1700 on September 13th, 2019.** Applications will not be considered by WSFD if submitted after this time and date. ***THIS IS A HARD DEADLINE.***
2. After proposals are submitted, WSFD will work with the in-state interagency review committee to review and prioritize applications following the "State Evaluation Criteria" below and the guidelines listed in the "FY\_2020 WSFM WUI Grant Instructions to States\_WUI."
3. Final determination of which applications are recommended for funding will be made at that time along with any final edits to applications with consultation with the Cooperator. Proposals not selected will be notified.
4. Selected proposals will then receive the unique link to submit an official application through the CSS portal.
5. WSFD will submit final applications to Western States Fire Managers on September 27<sup>th</sup>, 2019.
6. Western State Fire Managers will review the applications and make recommendations for funding to the Council of Western State Foresters and USDA Forest Service in the fall 2019.
7. Any funded applications will be awarded generally by summer 2020.

#### **State Evaluation Criteria:**

- Consistent with the 2010 Wyoming Forest Action Plan objective to restore fire adapted landscapes, preference will be given to complete Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPP) and project areas identified in the application as high priority in CWPPs. Completed CWPPs are a requirement of the application.

- A 50/50 “dollar-for-dollar” match is a requirement of this application. Cooperators can show either hard or soft match on the application. Proposals that show a clear and effective use of local matching funds will be more desirable and make the proposal more competitive.
- Projects which demonstrate commitment to community-wide protection will receive preference. Examples include treatments of common areas within, or perimeters around, subdivisions and communities or favoring treatments of forest adjacent to homes. Projects which solely constitute Firewise landscaping or defensible space will not receive additional preference.
- Projects which have potential to enhance local economies, by utilizing local contractors, wood product harvesting and processing infrastructure (loggers, truck drivers, mills, etc.) will receive preference. Describe how projects incorporate these elements in the narratives.
- Successful proposal applications will give specific clear, achievable, measurable, and quantifiable goals in their narratives such as number of acres to be treated, defensible spaces implemented, wildfire mitigation plans to create, and goals for education and outreach (number of workshops, mailings, direct contacts with landowners, etc.).
- Cooperators who submit more than one project proposal must prioritize proposals in order of most important to least important. Prioritization of proposals will be taken into consideration in the event of a tie between multiple proposals. Priority listings may be communicated to the in-state interagency selection committee via email at the time of application submission.
- Cooperators must submit their applications by the deadline above to be considered.
- Cooperators are allowed to submit up to two maps of the proposed project area to assist the in-state interagency selection committee in the review process. These maps will not be included in the application packet sent to the Western States Fire Managers.
- The in-state interagency selection committee may take other information into consideration such as previous years success in this program (including funded and not funded), past performance, and available funding and utilization rate of that funding available from previous grant years.

#### **Sub-Recipient Agency - Letter of Commitment**

When applying for the 2020 grant, Cooperator applications must include a letter of commitment from the sub-recipient agency certifying that they have reviewed a potential sub-award agreement and fully understand the requirements of the program.

**Supporting documents (maps and letters of commitment) must be submitted by email with the PDF draft application by the due date and time to Wyoming State Forestry Division Senior Resource Forester-Fuels (addresses below).** Supporting documents cannot be attached and sent through the portal. Letters of Commitment and maps will only be used in the WSFD in-state interagency selection committee evaluation process.

For questions or comments on the proposal/application process, scoring and ranking system, or the Western States Wildland Urban Interface grant program in general, please contact:

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