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Route To:

Subject: Call for Proposals for Community Assistance and Wildland Urban Interface Projects

To: All Parties Interested in Helping Implement the National Fire Plan

REPLY DUE ROUND I: APRIL 30, 2001
REPLY DUE ROUND II: JUNE 15, 2001

This letter is a request for proposals for the Community Assistance program components of the National Fire Plan being delivered through the USDA-Forest Service (FS), and the USDI's National Park Service (NPS), Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in the Pacific Northwest. Congress designed these programs to support community planning for fire protection, to facilitate the economic use of woody materials removed during fuels management activities, and to complement the activities of state and federal land management agencies engaged in implementing the National Fire Plan. This letter and attachments describe the programs, eligible activities, eligible applicants, application process, timelines, and evaluation criteria that will be used to select and fund program activities. Proposals will be solicited in two rounds, with funds evaluated and awarded on a competitive basis. Regardless of the number and dollar value of projects submitted in Round One, there will be significant funds available for those projects submitted and accepted in Round Two.

The programs included in this request for proposals are:

- (1) "Wildland Urban Interface Fuels Projects" of the USDI's National Park Service (NPS), Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM);
- (2) "Economic Action Program" of the USDA Forest Service;
- (3) "Economic Action Program Pilot Projects" of the USDA Forest Service; and
- (4) "Community Planning for Fire Protection Program" of the USDA Forest Service.

Working with local communities is a critical element in helping restore damaged landscapes and reducing fire hazards near homes and communities. The focus of this work is directed at:

- ❑ **Expanding community participation.** Expand the participation of local communities and businesses in efforts to reduce fire hazards and use local labor for fuels treatment, restoration work and finding economical uses for small diameter wood.
- ❑ **Increasing local capacity.** Build on local community action plans or develop new ones and provide financial and technical assistance to implement those plans.



- ❑ **Increasing interagency coordination.** Partner with other federal, state, local, and volunteer firefighting efforts to reduce local fire hazard risks.
- ❑ **Learning from people.** Encourage grassroots approaches and cooperation best suited to local communities for reducing wildfire risk and expanding markets for low-value woody material.
- ❑ **Reducing fire risk in the wildland urban interface.** Encourage programs that will reduce the risk of fires to communities.

Project proposals should focus on community-based fire planning, strive for increased utilization of material created by fuels treatment, serve as a pilot or demonstration project of small diameter utilization, and plan and/or implement projects for reducing fire hazards to communities, watersheds, and threatened or endangered species within high fire threat zones. Projects can be interagency in nature and coordinated with FS, NPS, FWS, BLM, BIA and state and other partners' projects wherever practical. Projects should emphasize local employment and be coordinated with human resource programs where appropriate.

Eligible projects may include development of strategic community fire plans, hazardous fuel reduction project plans, and implementation in wildland-urban interface zones; studies of wood utilization options for small diameter forest products; small diameter utilization marketing and business plans; purchase of processing equipment to demonstrate fuels treatment methods on private, non-industrial lands; business feasibility studies to utilize materials from fuels treatment projects; training in small diameter utilization opportunities; small diameter utilization pilot or demonstration projects; resource inventory and assessment; wood processing equipment design and demonstration; and wildland urban interface fire prevention and education efforts.

Proposals for construction of facilities or acquisition of real estate will not be considered, with the exception of small demonstration structures mentioned in the Program Fact Sheet located in the section titled "Eligible Projects Under The Economic Action Program Pilot Projects" (Enclosure 1).

These programs may share funding with federal, state, tribal, local agencies and non-profit organizations where appropriate. For the "Economic Action Program", "Economic Action Program Pilot Projects" and the "Community Planning for Fire Protection Program," funds will be distributed via grants and the federal contribution may not exceed 80% of the total project cost. Assistance agreements will be used for the Department of Interior's Wildland Urban Interface Fuels Projects, with no requirement for matching funds.

Projects involving ground-disturbing activities may trigger a requirement to perform appropriate National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) analysis, Section 7 consultation procurement under the Endangered Species Act, and National Historical Preservation Act deliberation. Even

if NEPA is not required, the project may still need some level of analysis to meet State standards. Participating federal agencies should be aware of this potential requirement and, if appropriate, provide assurance that the required analyses and consultations will take place.

All Parties Interested in Helping Implement the National Fire Plan

3

The Forest Service is serving as a clearinghouse for this call for proposals. Information on the National Fire Plan including required grant application forms, assurances and certifications are available on the Forest Service Internet site at www.fs.fed.us/r6/coop. The following items are enclosed to assist proponents in preparation of complete proposals under the Community Assistance Program of the National Fire Plan:

- **Program Fact Sheet** -Enclosure 1
- **How to Apply** - Enclosure 2
- **Grant Application Form** -Enclosure 3

/s/ Charles F. Krebs

CHARLES F. KREBS
Director, Cooperative Programs

Enclosure 1

MULTI-AGENCY NATIONAL FIRE PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

Community Assistance and Economic Action Programs

Program Fact Sheet

Introduction: National Fire Plan funding from the Forest Service in the Pacific Northwest is intended to support strategic community fire planning and to cost-share forest products utilization and marketing projects and demonstrations within areas impacted by forest and rangeland fires last year and those threatened by wild fires in the future. Financial assistance is available through grants, agreements, and contracts to accomplish local projects. Normal program requirements and guidelines apply. The maximum amount the Forest Service will contribute for any one project is \$250,000.

The NPS, FWS, BLM, and BIA Hazardous Fuels Management Program includes the Wildland Urban Interface Fuels activity to implement fuel treatments for reducing hazardous fuels which may threaten communities within the wildland urban interface. Financial assistance is available through assistance agreements.

Eligibility: Counties, cities, federal, state and local governmental agencies, federally recognized tribes, universities and colleges, and state-chartered non-profit organizations may apply. Solicitations from private businesses or individuals cannot be accepted. Contact your local FS, NPS, FWS, BLM, or BIA office to determine eligibility.

Eligible Projects under “Wildland Urban Interface Fuels Projects”: Funding is available to plan and implement fuel treatments to mitigate risk in the wildland urban interface (WUI) where NPS, FWS, BLM, or Indian trust lands are adjacent to the WUI; education and prevention efforts in WUI areas; and plans, inventories, and assessments in WUI areas where NPS, FWS, BLM, or Indian trust lands are adjacent to WUI lands. Hazardous fuels reduction includes the cost of implementing fuels treatments, including prescribed fire, mechanical, and chemical treatment to reduce hazardous fuels for projects located in the WUI. Emphasis is placed on projects where fuels treatment can be accomplished on adjoining state, private, and other non-federal lands so as to extend greater protection to communities. Includes the cost of providing incentives, technical assistance, and education programs to communities and private landowners to encourage reduction of hazardous fuels around homeowner properties.

Eligible Projects under the “Economic Action Program”: A need exists to transfer and commercialize new technology that develops or expands uses and markets for low-value woody material. Proposals must have the potential to reduce fire hazards by providing incentives for economic use of small diameter and underutilized forest products, including efforts to help offset the costs of forest restoration. Funds can be used to provide training and technical assistance to identify and develop new markets for underutilized wood products; create marketing tools such as product catalogs, trade shows and producer directories; prepare market assessments and feasibility studies; provide direct marketing assistance; develop business plans; purchase wood processing equipment to demonstrate economic use of underutilized materials. The use of forest products consultants to execute these projects is encouraged.

Eligible Projects under the “Economic Action Program Pilot Projects”: Supports pilot or demonstration projects that expand existing markets or develop new markets for wood products resulting from fuels removal. Examples include biomass-to-energy applications; uses for compost, pulp, landscaping mulch, and animal bedding; wood in transportation structures such as vehicular or pedestrian bridges; and demonstration of round timber construction technology for visitor centers, kiosks, park shelters, and small buildings framed with small diameter materials. Significant technical assistance may be available to assist in development and implementation of such projects. Projects must be able to serve as a model for others to follow and include plans to disseminate and share what is learned through the pilot or demonstration project. Funds can be used to design or purchase wood processing equipment for demonstration and potential for broad applications.

Eligible Projects under the “Community Planning for Fire Protection Program”: Funding is to help communities build capacity to prepare community fire plans that identify priority fire hazards, local fire protection training and equipment needs, Firewise and other community-based projects. These might include community Fire Safe Plans, small diameter utilization business plans, hazardous resource assessments, or fuel reduction project plans. These plans should provide a platform for interagency assistance and coordination.

Enclosure 2

**MULTI-AGENCY NATIONAL FIRE PLAN IMPLEMENTATION
Community Assistance and Economic Action Programs**

How to Apply

Proposal Process: In order to facilitate the collection and evaluation of project proposals, project proponents should submit applications directly to the Forest Service. The Forest Service will thus function as a central clearinghouse for all the participating federal funding agencies.

Complete applications must be received by either **April 30th** or **June 15th** and must contain the following:

- **Signed Project Summary Form (Enclosure 3A)**
- **Project Narrative Description and Evaluation Criteria (Enclosure 3B)**
- **Project Work Form (Enclosure 3C)**
- **Project Budget (Enclosure 3D)**

Completed applications may be submitted via the following methods:

Mail:	Fax:	Email:
National Fire Plan Program Cooperative Programs USDA-Forest Service PO Box 3623 Portland, OR 97208-3623 Attn: Charles F. Krebs, Director	Fax: 503/808-2339	r6_nfp@fs.fed.us

Proposals will be reviewed by an interagency team, screened for eligibility and ranked for funding. Participating federal agencies will contact applicants regarding the status of their proposal and if additional project scoping is necessary.

Funding: The federal contribution to the implementation of a project funded with Forest Service funds shall not exceed 80 percent of the total cost of the project. In calculating the federal contribution, project budgets must take into account the fair market value of equipment, personnel, services, administrative and other costs provided by the Forest Service and other federal agencies. Local contributions may include cash and/or fair market value of equipment, personnel, and services provided to complete the scope of work defined in the project. For Department of Interior WUI projects, there is no minimum matching requirement.

All selected projects should be allocated funds, via grants, agreements or contracts, before August 1, 2001.

Enclosure 3A

**MULTI-AGENCY NATIONAL FIRE PLAN IMPLEMENTATION
Community Assistance and Economic Action Programs**

Project Summary Form

Applicant

Applicant/Organization:

Phone:

FAX:

Email:

Address (Street or P. O. Box, City, State, Zip):

Project Coordinator

Project Coordinator (Name and Title):

Organization/Jurisdiction:

Phone:

FAX:

Email:

Project Information

Project Title:

Project Start:

Project End:

Federal Funding
Request:

Total Project
Funding:

Are you submitting multiple projects? If so, please explain and prioritize:

Brief Project Description:

Project Location:

County:

Congressional District:

Project Type:

- Community Fire Plan
- Business Plan
- Market/Feasibility Study

- Education/Prevention Program
- Fuels Management Plan
- Fuels Treatment Project

- Fuels Utilization Project (demo/pilot/production)
- Equipment Purchase/Lease/Rental
- Other (Describe)

If the applicant is an unincorporated area, define the geographic area being represented:

Certification

*I hereby certify that I am authorized by
through the National Fire Plan.*

to submit this application to a federal agency offering assistance

Name: _____

Title: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

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Community Assistance and Economic Action Programs

Project Narrative Description

Applications for funding must include a narrative response that describes the proposal. Please do not submit responses longer than one page, single space, 12 pitch font.

Briefly describe project including, but not limited to:

What is the opportunity problem or need that the proposal seeks to address? Address the following:

- project implementation
- anticipated outcomes
- partners
- urgency
- connection to the National Fire Plan
- time frame

Response:

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Community Assistance and Economic Action Programs

Project Evaluation Criteria

Applications for funding must include narrative responses that address the following project criteria, where applicable. **Limit your responses to the space provided below. The following criterion is worth up to 10 points in the evaluation process.**

1. Expanding community participation.

Describe how interested parties have been provided an opportunity to become informed (outreach) and to what extent does support for the project seem apparent?

Describe local cash or in-kind contributions. What is the longevity of the commitment and how will the project be maintained or sustained?

Describe how outreach will be conducted to assure that all interested individuals and organizations will have equal access to the benefits of the project (Civil Rights Title VI compliance).

Response:

2. Increasing local capacity.

Describe how the project increases community capacity, educates the public or improves local conditions or infrastructure.

How is the project clearly tied to local or multi-community strategies, or does this proposal create a plan?

What is the opportunity for providing sustainable diversification and improvement to the local economy?

How many local jobs are expected to be created or retained and for how long?

Response:

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Community Assistance and Economic Action Programs

Project Evaluation Criteria

Applications for funding must include narrative responses that address the following project criteria, where applicable. **Limit your responses to the space provided below. The following criterion is worth up to 10 points in the evaluation process.**

3. Increasing interagency coordination.

Describe the level of cooperation between federal, state, tribal and local government and community organizations in planning or implementing this project?

Who are the partners in carrying out this project?

Will expertise from resource agencies be included in project implementation?

Response:

4. Learning from people.

Were other alternatives considered and, if so, why were they rejected in favor of this proposal?

What are the environmental, social, or educational benefits of the project?

What are the short and long-term outcomes from this project? How will they be measured and reported?

How can this project be used by other communities?

Response:

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Community Assistance and Economic Action Programs

Project Evaluation Criteria

Applications for funding must include narrative responses that address the following project criteria, where applicable. **Limit your responses to the space provided below. The following criterion is worth up to 10 points in the evaluation process.**

5. Reducing fire risk.

How will the project reduce fire risk to the community over the short and long-term?

How will the proposal provide fire protection for communities, watersheds, and/or threatened and endangered species?

If biomass or small diameter material is removed, will it be utilized and, if so, estimate how much (tons, MBF, cunits, other)? How will the material be utilized?

What is the geographic scope of this project (acres treated, number of communities served, other)?

Are needed permits, environmental clearances, signed agreements and volunteers in place?

Response:

Enclosure 3D
MULTI-AGENCY NATIONAL FIRE PLAN IMPLEMENTATION
Community Assistance and Economic Action Programs
Project Budget

Cost Category Description	Federal Agency	Applicant	Partner 1	Partner 2	Total
Personnel					
Subtotal					
Fringe Benefits					
Subtotal					
Travel					
Subtotal					
Equipment					
Subtotal					
Supplies					
Subtotal					
Contractual					
Subtotal					
Other					
Subtotal					
Total of Direct Charges					
Indirect Charges					
Grant Total of Project					
Program Income (using deductive alternative)					