

California Climate Investments

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

Forest Health Program Grant Guidelines

FY 2023-2024



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Proposals Due: 3 p.m., January 15, 2024

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FOREST HEALTH PROGRAM SUMMARY

The Forest Health Program addresses the risk to California's forests from disturbance events including catastrophic wildfires, drought, and pest mortality. These events are the result of climate change, past land management practices, and an increasing number of people living in the wildland and urban interface.

CAL FIRE's Forest Health Program awards funding to landscape-scale land management projects that achieve the following objectives:

- Restore forest health and disaster resilience to California's forests.
- Protect upper watersheds where California's water supply originates.
- Promote long-term storage of carbon in forest trees and soils through reforestation and reduction of forest overcrowding and pests.
- Minimize the loss of forest carbon from unnaturally severe disturbance events by lowering and redistributing forest fuel loads.
- Further the goals of the [California Forest Carbon Plan](#), [California's Natural and Working Lands Implementation Plan](#), [California's Wildfire & Forest Resilience Action Plan](#), [California's Strategic Plan for Expanding the Use of Beneficial Fire](#), and [AB 32 Climate Change Scoping Plan](#).

CAL FIRE seeks to significantly increase fuels management, fire reintroduction, and reforestation of forests degraded by overcrowding, drought, pest infestation, and catastrophic fire. All Forest Health projects must have climate benefits from one or more of the following: 1) treatment activities, 2) avoided future wildfire and fossil fuel use, or 3) reforestation or growth and yield of remaining vegetation.

Applicants must submit supporting documentation to enable CAL FIRE staff to validate benefits using the [Forest Health Quantification Methodology and Calculator Tool](#) developed by CAL FIRE and the California Air Resources Board (CARB).

This Fiscal Year 2023-24 solicitation includes two different grant types:

- Forest Health (please refer to [Appendix A](#))
- Forest Health Post-Fire Reforestation and Regeneration (please refer to [Appendix B](#))

Applicants applying for both grant types must submit separate applications for each type. Applicants applying for Tribal Wildfire Resilience grants should refer to the [webpage](#) and [grantee resources](#) associated with the Tribal Wildfire Resilience program.

FUNDING AVAILABILITY – FISCAL YEAR 2023/2024

Up to \$120 million of Fiscal Year 2023/2024 Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund monies will be awarded to eligible applicants through CAL FIRE’s Forest Health Program.

Up to an additional \$50 million will be awarded to Post-Fire Reforestation and Regeneration grant applicants.

Grant Type	Funding Available Amount	Grant End Date
Forest Health	Up to \$120 million	3/31/2030
Forest Health Post-Fire Reforestation and Regeneration	Up to \$50 million	3/31/2030

Eligibility and scoring criteria for each grant type are listed in Appendices A – B:

[Appendix A – Forest Health](#)

[Appendix B – Post Fire Reforestation and Regeneration](#)

APPLICATION PROCESS

Applications to the Forest Health Program, including Post-Fire Reforestation and Regeneration applications, must be submitted using the Grants Portal in eCivis by the application deadline of **3 p.m. PST on January 15, 2024**. Please verify that you have selected the applicable grant solicitation for the project type you are applying for when starting your application.

[Forest Health and Post-Fire Reforestation and Regeneration Grant Solicitation Link](#)

All required materials must be submitted through the Grants Portal. Hard copies or electronic copies submitted through an alternate method will not be accepted.

Please refer to the [Grants Portal – Application Submittal User Guide](#) for detailed instructions on how to access the Grants Portal and complete your application. The guide is also accessible via the CAL FIRE Grants webpage. It is highly recommended that you set-up an account, access, and submit your application in advance of the application deadline to avoid any technical issues.

Below is a list of files that must be uploaded as part of your application, along with links to templates as applicable. Please refer to the full application for required file formats and size limitations for each file type.

- Articles of Incorporation (Required for Non-Profits)
- Governing Resolution (Required for Non-Profits and Local Agencies)
- [Non-Discrimination Compliance Statement \(Std. 19\)](#)
- [Drug-Free Workplace Certification \(Std. 21\)](#)
- [Payee Data Record \(Std. 204\)](#) *A W-9 may be substituted for tribal and governmental agencies*
- Scope of Work
- Project Maps
- [Forest Health Project Workbook](#)
- Spatial Data Shapefiles
- Project Budget Narrative
- [GHG Emissions Workbook](#)
- Project Partner Letters of Commitment
- Letters of Support
- [CARB Co-Benefit Assessment Methodology Community Engagement Questionnaire](#)
- Statement of Qualifications (SOQ)
- Environmental Compliance Documents
- UC/CSU Model Agreement Template (Required for UC/CSU and associated auxiliary entities)
- Justification and supporting documentation for indirect rates exceeding 12%

Application Review and Awards

A list of all complete and eligible Forest Health and Post-Fire Reforestation and Regeneration applications received will be posted on the Forest Health grants webpage at least 10 business days prior to award.

CAL FIRE will review completed applications that meet the Program Eligibility Criteria in Appendix A for Forest Health applications and Appendix B for Post-Fire Reforestation and Regeneration applications. Eligible applications will be scored by CAL FIRE staff and an inter-agency panel using the Grant Selection Criteria in Appendix A for Forest Health applications and Appendix B for Post-Fire Reforestation and Regeneration applications. Final awards will be determined based on project scores, program need, and relative fit of the awarded projects to each other, both geographically and with respect to proposed activities. As a California Climate Investments (CCI) program, the Forest Health Program will strive to award at least 40% of the funding it receives from the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund to projects that demonstrate they will target and provide specific benefits to populations that meet the State's definition of [low-income or disadvantaged](#).

CAL FIRE reserves the right to fund projects in total or in part, whichever best serves the objectives of the Forest Health Program. Project applicants that are selected to receive partial funding will be provided additional information on their revised funding amount, project performance period, and any other required changes to their application, as needed.

Project applicants will be notified by email if they have, or have not been, selected to receive funding.

Successful applications will be summarized and posted to CAL FIRE's [Forest Health Grants webpage](#) within two weeks of the decision to fund. Applications will be treated in accordance with the Public Records Act requirements, and certain information, subject to those requirements, may be publicly disclosed. Additionally, information provided in the application may be used in public reporting such as to meet California Climate Investments (CCI) requirements.

GENERAL GRANT CONDITIONS AND PROJECT ADMINISTRATION

Project Performance Period

- The Project Performance Period is from the time the Grant Agreement is fully signed by the CAL FIRE Deputy Director or designee to the Agreement termination date. Only eligible costs incurred during the Project Performance Period will be paid by the State.
- CAL FIRE will execute all Grant Agreements as soon as feasible and no later than October 31, 2024 for FY 2023-2024 Forest Health grant awards.
- **Project work funded with a FY 2023-2024 Forest Health or Post-Fire Reforestation & Regeneration grant award must be completed no later than March 31, 2030.**
- Final invoices for all grant-related work must be submitted to CAL FIRE no later than 30 days after the Agreement Termination Date.

Project Reporting

Progress Reports. Using the Grants Portal system, grantees are required to report on progress toward completion of the Scope of Work included in the Grant Agreement every calendar quarter using the Forest Health Progress Report template. Reports are due on the last business day of the month following the end of each quarter (Due at the end of April, July, October, and January).

Report contents are determined by CAL FIRE and are consistent with the required project-type-specific reporting requirements in CARB's Funding Guidelines. Information to be submitted includes, but is not limited to:

- Project accomplishments
- Challenges and obstacles
- State dollars allocated and matching funds contributed
- Acres of land treated, activities completed, and GIS shapefiles that map those treatments (see "Spatial Data" below)
- Number of trees and acres planted
- Bone dry tons of biomass delivered to a renewable energy facility, tons of biomass delivered to a sawmill, and renewable energy produced
- Before and after photographs

Spatial Data. Grantees will also be required to provide project information to CAL FIRE for entry into CalMAPPER, CAL FIRE's geospatial database that facilitates mapping and monitoring of CCI and other CAL FIRE vegetation treatment projects. Information from grantees will include shapefiles of project boundary (using GIS Software), project type, grantee

contact information, project activities and costs, and other information. CalMAPPER information from grantees will be required at specific times throughout the Project Performance Period of the grant, including at initial grant award, at periodic invoice billing submissions, and at the project closeout. Some reported project information will be made publicly available on the CARB website or CAL FIRE website.

Modeled Expected Jobs. Grantees of Forest Health or Post-Fire Reforestation and Regeneration grants must complete and submit to CAL FIRE a California Climate Investments (CCI) [Job Co-benefit Modeling Tool](#). Typically, this only needs to be reported once (an exception might be if the project funding amount changes significantly). This must be submitted before the grantee can receive an executed award.

Actual Job and Job Training Outcomes. All Forest Health and Post-Fire Reforestation & Regeneration grantees must report semi-annually to CAL FIRE on all jobs directly associated with the implementation of grant activities, including jobs provided by contractors and sub-contractors (unless an exception applies). Job training outcomes that the grant project supported and that result in a formal credential must also be included. This reporting is due in June and December.

Final Report. All grantees are required to submit a final project report to CAL FIRE with the final invoice. The final report must include a final summary of all metrics reported in prior periodic progress reports, as well as a narrative summary of project outcomes and photographic documentation of project activities and outcomes.

Post-Project Monitoring. For a randomly selected subset of funded projects, CAL FIRE will be required to report results of the project and permanence conditions for ten years after project completion in accordance with the CARB Funding Guidelines. CAL FIRE will collect monitoring data on these projects during that period. CAL FIRE will coordinate with selected projects about access to collect this data.

Note: Applicants may budget grant funding for meeting reporting requirements that apply as part of fulfilling the terms and conditions of the grant. CAL FIRE encourages applicants to consider their needs for reporting and to prepare the proposed project budget accordingly.

Project reports will be treated in accordance with the Public Records Act requirements, and certain information, subject to those requirements, may be publicly disclosed.

Changes to an Approved Project and Amendments

A grantee wishing to change the scope of work, budget, or project performance period of an approved project must submit the proposed change via the Grants Portal to CAL FIRE for review and approval. Any change must be consistent with the statutes, regulations, and guidance governing the program. Requested budget changes may not increase the amount of funds awarded by CAL FIRE, unless such changes are initiated by CAL FIRE.

The following scope of work revisions may require the project Grant Agreement to be amended:

- Changes in project end date (as allowed by legislation or liquidation deadline for the fund source)

- Modifications to any budget categories.
- Changes in physical project location; or
- Any changes to project area or treatment type that result in a difference of more than 10% of expected GHG sequestration.

CAL FIRE reserves the right to reject proposed changes to an approved project or budget. Specific amendment guidance is provided on the [Forest Health Grantee Resources webpage](#).

Once a Grant Agreement has been signed, it may only be amended with advanced written consent of CAL FIRE and the grantee. Any amendment requests to extend the project timeline, where permissible, must be submitted to CAL FIRE sixty (60) days before the agreement termination date using the Grants Portal system. CAL FIRE reserves the right to waive the sixty (60) days in extenuating circumstances.

Project Termination

A Grant Agreement may only be terminated by CAL FIRE or the grantee upon 30 days advanced written notice to the other party. Further details on this process will be provided in the Grant Agreement.

Accounting Requirements

The grantee must maintain an accounting system that accurately reflects fiscal transactions. The accounting system must provide an adequate audit trail, including original source documents, such as receipts, progress payments, invoices, purchase orders, timecards, cancelled checks, etc. The accounting system must document the total cost of the project. The grantee must maintain accounting records and keep source documents for all expenditures related to each grant for three years following the Project Performance Period, one year following an audit, or one year after final disposition of any disputed audit findings, whichever occurs later.

Loss of Funding

CAL FIRE reserves the right to withdraw funding an award if stated requirements are not met. The following are examples of actions that may result in a grantee's loss of funding. This is not a complete list and is intended only to show examples.

1. Grantee fails to obtain an executed Grant Agreement by October 31, 2024.
2. Grantee has not satisfied all legal requirements (e.g., CEQA, NEPA, ancillary contracts, agreements, MOUs, etc.) necessary to initiate ground disturbing project work within 1 year of grant agreement execution.
3. Grantee begins ground-disturbing grant funded work prior to grant program approval on meeting environmental compliance.
4. Grantee fails to use all of the grant funds.
5. Grantee withdraws from the grant program.

6. Grantee fails to complete the funded project described in the Grant Agreement Scope of Work.
7. Grantee fails to submit all documentation within the time periods specified in the Grant Agreement.
8. Grantee changes the Project Scope of Work or project implementation without CAL FIRE's prior written approval.
9. Grantee changes the Project Scope of Work in a way that is inconsistent with the overall program goals or eligible activities.
10. Grantee or CAL FIRE terminates the Agreement.
11. Grantee engages in any activity that results in significant change to the expected GHG impacts of the project.
12. Grantee does not reinvest project income into the project.

Eligible Costs

Project costs must be consistent with the approved Project Application and incurred during the Project Performance Period as specified in the Grant Agreement. Costs associated with meeting grant reporting requirements, managing spatial data, and complying with the California Environmental Quality Act or National Environmental Policy Act may be eligible costs. Project elements that do not produce a direct GHG benefit (e.g., education, planning, etc.) must be linked with on-the-ground activities that do, or they will not be eligible costs.

Budget Item	Eligible Cost	Required Documentation
<p>Salaries and Wages</p>	<p>Salaries and wages of employees employed by the grantee who are DIRECTLY engaged in the execution of the grant project. Limited to actual time spent on the grant project. Leave benefits (i.e. sick leave, vacation, etc.) that are consistent with the grantee’s leave benefit policy may be charged to the grant in proportion to the percentage of time worked on the grant within the pay period. Examples of expenditures include time related to site visits and project monitoring, and completion of reporting related to the grant project. Staff time related to accounting, business services, etc. are allowed only if those functions are not included in the grantee's overhead cost.</p>	<p>A payroll summary of all employees’ time spent on the project must be provided with invoices requesting salary/wage reimbursement. Payroll documentation should show a nexus between time worked on the project and wages paid to the employee after the fact. Timesheets or similar documentation detailing days and hours worked on the project must be maintained and retained by the grantee for audit purposes but should not be submitted to CAL FIRE unless otherwise instructed. Any leave charged to the grant must reflect the calculation of time spent on the grant compared to overall time worked. A statement certifying that leave charged to the grant is in proportion to employee’s time spent must be included as part of the supporting documentation. All salary and wages charged to the grant must tie back to the grantee’s accounting records.</p>

Budget Item	Eligible Cost	Required Documentation
Benefits	<p>Employer contribution share of fringe benefits associated with employees (paid from salaries and wages Budget Item) who are directly engaged in the execution of the grant project. This will include Social Security, Medicare, Health Insurance, Pension Plan costs, payroll taxes, etc. as applicable for the specific employee.</p> <p>Sick/Vacation/Holiday leave is only allowed for full time employees that are exclusively paid by the grant. <small>Rev 12/4</small></p>	<p>Same documentation as Salaries and Wages. Payroll documentation showing wages and hours paid to the employee and associated fringe benefits. Backup documentation to be retained by grantee for audit records.</p>
Contractual	<p>Direct consultant and contractual services necessary to achieve the objectives of the grant. Examples of contractual costs will be RPF supervision/certification, professional/consultant services (the costs of consultant services necessary for project planning and implementation), fire prevention contractor, etc. Procurement of contractual services should be documented to ensure selection on a competitive basis and documentation of price analysis.</p>	<p>Invoices from Consultant/Contractor identifying expenditure, services performed, and period of services. When reporting acres, contractor invoices must identify when and where the acres were treated. Documents related to consultant/contractor selection analysis must be kept by the grantee and made available for audit purposes, upon request.</p>
Supplies	<p>Supplies that are used in the direct support of the project are allowable. Supplies exceeding \$500 per unit cost shall be documented to ensure procurement of supplies on a competitive basis and documentation of price analysis. Supply costs are only applicable to supplies purchased directly by the grantee. Supplies purchased by contractors must be charged to the "Contractual" category.</p>	<p>Receipts identifying items purchased, cost and date of purchase. Documentation related to cost analysis of procurement of supplies exceeding \$500 must be kept by the grantee and made available for audit purposes, upon request.</p>

Budget Item	Eligible Cost	Required Documentation
Travel	<p>Travel cost associated with travel to and from project sites, meetings, etc. directly related to the grant project and must be considered reasonable and necessary for the completion of the project. Reimbursement rates shall be consistent with the grantee's written travel policy. Absent a written policy, per diem shall not exceed the California Standard Per Diem Rate allowable by the U.S. General Services Administration. Mileage rates shall not exceed the rates allowable by IRS. Travel costs are applicable only to the grantee and their employees. Contractors' travel costs must be billed to the "Contractual" category.</p>	<p>Receipts identifying travel cost (i.e. lodging, rental cars). Mileage must be documented by either employee travel claims that are signed by the employee or vehicle mileage logs for vehicles owned by the grantee. Per Diem must be documented by employee travel claims. Grantee may be requested to provide a copy of their written travel policy. Documentation must be kept by the grantee and made available for audit purposes, upon request.</p>
Equipment	<p>Equipment is an item exceeding \$5,000 or more per unit cost and has a tangible useful life of more than one year. Cost to lease equipment to use in the grant project may be charged to the grant. A cost-benefit analysis to justify the cost of purchasing equipment versus leasing must be provided. Procurement of equipment must be done on a competitive basis and include documentation of price analysis. No more than \$400,000 in total may be spent on equipment purchases. Grantee must include in the application package the proposed use and maintenance plans for equipment after the Project Performance Period of the grant. Disposition of equipment beyond the project performance period is subject to CAL FIRE approval. If grantee fails to complete grant and/or dissolves during grant, equipment shall be returned to CAL FIRE. Equipment shall not be used as collateral or other means.</p>	<p>Cost of equipment purchased shall be substantiated by purchase receipt and a bid quote worksheet at the time of invoicing. All other documentation related to price analysis of procurement of equipment must be kept by the grantee and made available for audit purposes, upon request. Disposition of the equipment must be submitted and approved by CAL FIRE every two years upon completion of the project until notified in writing by CAL FIRE that reporting is no longer required.</p>

Budget Item	Eligible Cost	Required Documentation
Other	<p>Other costs that do not fit in any of the above categories. Cost must be directly related to the grant project. Use of equipment owned by the grantee may be charged to the grant at a rate set by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) "Labor Surcharge and Equipment Rental Rate" guide. Rates assessed on equipment not addressed in the Caltrans guide must obtain CAL FIRE approval prior to equipment use. Cost (such as rent, utilities, phones, general office supplies, etc.) that must be apportioned to the grant is considered indirect cost unless written justification is submitted and approved by CAL FIRE.</p>	<p>Invoices or receipts identifying the item and cost charged to the grant. Cost of leased equipment charged to the grant must be substantiated with receipts identifying equipment leased, dates equipment was leased, lease rate and total cost. Usage of grantee equipment must be substantiated with an equipment usage log, equipment used, rate and total rental cost. Documentation must be kept by the grantee and made available for audit purposes, upon request.</p>
Indirect Costs	<p>Indirect Costs are costs associated with doing business that are of a general nature and are incurred to benefit two or more functions within the grantee organization. These costs are not usually identified specifically within the grant agreement, project, or activity, but are necessary for the general operation of the organization. Examples include salaries and benefits of employees not directly assigned to a project; functions such as personnel, accounting, budgeting, audits, business services, information technology, janitorial, and salaries of supervisors and managers; and rent, utilities, supplies, etc. Functions included as direct versus indirect costs must be applied consistently for all activities within the grantee organization, regardless of fund source. The maximum allowable indirect charge for this grant program is 12% unless exemption is granted by CAL FIRE (see Indirect Rate Exemption).</p>	<p>Applied on a percentage (%) basis on direct costs <u>except for equipment</u>. Documentation related to the determination of the grantee's indirect cost rate must be retained by the grantee, and made available upon request, for audit purposes.</p>

Indirect Rate Exemption

Inclusion of indirect costs is acceptable and should generally not exceed 12% of the total direct grant costs, minus equipment costs. Applicants may request a higher indirect rate by providing additional justification as to why a higher rate is needed as well as including appropriate documentation substantiating the basis of the higher indirect rate (e.g. a copy of a federally approved Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement, etc.) In no instance may the request exceed 20%. This shall apply to all entities including University of California (UC) and California State University (CSU) entities. Documentation related to the determination of the Grantee's indirect cost rate must be retained by the Grantee, and made available upon request, for audit purposes.

For applicants requesting a higher rate, you should include this rate within your application request and budget breakdown. CAL FIRE will evaluate your request for higher indirect rate concurrently with your grant application. If your project is selected for award but the higher rate is not approved, CAL FIRE will notify you of the revised award amount and changes to your budget if needed. Approval of the higher indirect rate is solely at CAL FIRE's discretion.

Ineligible Costs

The following are ineligible for reimbursement under the grant:

1. Costs incurred before or after the Project Performance Period, including but not limited to costs to prepare the project application associated with this solicitation.
2. Overtime, for employees or contractors. All hours will be reimbursed at the straight time rate.
3. Projects or activities utilizing CAL FIRE staff without corresponding reimbursements or requests seeking funding for services already provided by CAL FIRE.
4. Late fees, penalties, and bank fees.
5. Any activity that would lead to the project not achieving a GHG reduction.
6. Any practice or activity that, in CAL FIRE's judgment, is not a best management practice or that is, or could be, harmful to the forested landscape.
7. Any indirect costs based on percentage of equipment costs (see above).

Payment of Grant Funds

Funds will be disbursed only once there is a fully executed Grant Agreement between CAL FIRE and the grantee. **Payments will be made on a reimbursement basis** (i.e., the grantee pays for services, products, or supplies; invoices CAL FIRE for the same; and the State reimburses the grantee upon approval of the invoice). No work prior to or after the Project Performance Period will be reimbursable. Advance funds may be provided (see Advances below) in lieu of reimbursement.

The grantee will submit to CAL FIRE an invoice form consistent with invoice guidance in [Appendix I](#) when requesting payment of any type and to include appropriate documentation to support the costs (e.g., paid vendor receipts, payroll documents, other back-up documentation of expenses). An invoice template is available on the [Forest Health Grantee Resources webpage](#).

CAL FIRE may conduct a site inspection to verify that work invoiced has been satisfactorily completed. The invoice will then be forwarded to Sacramento Headquarters for review and subsequent approval of payment. **Expect payment to be issued 45 calendar days from the time an undisputed invoice is received.** If an invoice is incomplete or non-reimbursable, it will be returned to the grantee.

Advances

Advance payments may be considered for nonprofit organizations, local agencies, special districts (including Resource Conservation Districts (RCDs)), private forest landowners, and California Native American tribes per California Public Resources Code § 4799.05. Advance payments are solely at CAL FIRE's discretion.

An [Advance Payment Request Form](#) must be submitted identifying how funds may be used over a six-month period. No single advance payment shall exceed 25% of the total grant award. [An accountability report](#) must be submitted to CAL FIRE no later than every four months after receiving the advance until the funds have been fully utilized. Advances should be fully utilized within a six-month period unless additional time is approved by CAL FIRE. No additional advances may be requested until acceptable documentation is received by CAL FIRE that the previous advance has been fully exhausted on eligible expenses.

Advance payments must be deposited into a federally insured, interest-bearing account that provides the ability to track interest earned and withdrawals. Any interest earned on advance payment funds must be accounted for and used toward offsetting the project cost or returned to the STATE according to subdivision (d) of Section 11019.1 of the Government Code. Refer to Appendix J on calculations and supporting documentation for interest income.

Prevailing Wage Requirements

CAL FIRE provides no opinion as to whether projects may be subject to prevailing wage law. For determination on prevailing wage applicability, please contact the [Department of Industrial Relations](#). It is the applicant's responsibility to budget for prevailing wages in their project cost when applicable.

Conflict of Interest

All applicants and individuals who participate in the review of submitted Project Proposals are subject to state and federal conflict-of-interest laws. Any individual who has participated in planning or setting priorities for a specific solicitation over and above the public comment process or who will participate in any part of the grant development and negotiation process on behalf of the public is ineligible to receive funds or personally benefit from funds through that solicitation. Failure to comply with conflict-of-interest laws, including business and financial disclosure provisions, will result in the Project Proposal being rejected and any subsequent grant agreement being declared void. Other legal actions may also be taken. Applicable

statutes include, but are not limited to, California Government Code section 1090 and Public Contract Code sections 10365.5, 10410, and 10411.

Grantee must establish conflict-of-interest policies and procedures and maintain adequate controls to ensure that the grantee or anyone acting on behalf of the grantee does not have any conflicting personal or financial interest associated with activities funded by the grant project. CAL FIRE may request additional documentation during the performance of the grant, including during review of financial or progress reporting, or during State Audit to verify that a conflict of interest does not exist.

State Audit

Upon completion of the project, the State may audit the project records. A project is considered complete upon receipt of final grant payment from the State. The purpose of the audit is to verify that project expenditures were properly documented. The audit would be requested by the State after the final payment request has been received and all project transactions have been completed.

If your project is selected for audit, you will be contacted at least 30 days in advance to the audit commencing. The audit should include all books, papers, accounts, documents, or other records of the grantee, as they relate to the project for which State funds were granted. Projects may be subject to an audit at any time during the Project Performance Period and three years following Project completion.

To expedite the audit, the grantee shall have the project records, including the source documents and cancelled checks, readily available. The grantee shall also make an employee who has knowledge of the project and the accounting procedure or system available to assist the State auditor. The grantee shall provide a copy of any document, paper, record, or the like as requested by the State auditor.

All records of an audited project must be retained by the grantee for a period of not less than one year after completion of the State audit or after final disposition of any disputed audit findings, whichever occurs later. Grantees must keep source documents for all expenditures related to each grant for at least three years following Project completion, or one year following completion of an audit, whichever occurs later, unless the grantee has a longer retention policy.

APPENDIX A – FOREST HEALTH APPLICATIONS

Eligibility and Requirements

Eligible Activities

Fostering healthy forests calls for a balanced approach using a variety of activities including fuels reduction, fire reintroduction, pest management, reforestation, and utilization of woody biomass. Activities must be applied across large landscapes to achieve regional resilience. Projects that implement a mix of activities with multiple, experienced partners will be given priority. Projects may include planning and organizational capacity-building as components of the grant application. Up to 10% of the total grant funds requested may be spent on such activities. Applicants wanting to use more than 10% of the total grant funds requested for planning and organizational capacity-building should consult the California Department of Conservation's [Regional Forest and Fire Capacity Program webpage](#) for information about whether that program may be a more suitable fit.

All revenues collected as a result of activities paid for, in full or in part, with Forest Health Program grant funds must be tracked and re-invested into the project to further grant objectives (please refer to “Program Income” in [Appendix C - Explanation of Terms](#)).

The following activities are eligible for funding through the Forest Health Program:

- **Forest Fuels Reduction** – Eligible activities must focus on treating understory trees and brush with the goals of reducing fire hazards, improving tree growth, stabilizing carbon in retained trees, and increasing forest resilience. Forest thinning activities can be manual or mechanical and must be designed to change stand structure to 1) concentrate carbon storage in widely spaced and larger trees that are more resilient to wildfire, drought, and pest outbreaks; and 2) reduce the likelihood of wildfire transitioning from the forest floor into the forest canopy. Commercial harvesting activities should focus on promoting carbon storage in remaining trees and must be compatible with achieving resilient forests with stable carbon storage that provide co-benefits such as fish and wildlife habitat, increased biodiversity, and wildlife adaptation to climate change. Pre-commercial and brush removal activities, as well as post-wildfire fuels reduction that removes dead and dying trees in conjunction with reforestation are also eligible.
- **Prescribed Fire** – Eligible activities must focus on the need to reintroduce fires to fire-adapted forest ecosystems. Applying fire to the landscape may serve multiple purposes, including reducing fuel loads, creating heterogenous and diverse vegetation, maintaining cultural practices of indigenous communities, or promoting healthy ecosystem processes such as water storage and pest control. Prescribed burns may be completed with private or public burn crews.
- **Pest Management** – Eligible activities must address pest control and related forest health improvement, while reducing pest-related mortality, improving tree growth, stabilizing carbon retained in trees, and increasing forest resilience. Activities may include forest thinning or brush removal. Forest thinning activities (manual or mechanical) should change stand structure to increase carbon storage in more widely spaced trees that are more resistant to wildfire, drought, and insect attacks. Harvesting activities should focus on

removing dead, diseased, suppressed, or slow-growing trees for the purpose of promoting carbon storage in remaining trees and must be compatible with achieving resilient forests with stable carbon storage that provide co-benefits such as fish and wildlife habitat, increased biodiversity, and wildlife adaptation to climate change.

- **Reforestation** – Eligible activities should establish a diverse, native forest, which will result in stable carbon sequestration and storage, improved watershed and habitat functions, and forest resilience. Species selection must be appropriate for the site and may be used to address climate adaptation. Climate-appropriate seed lots may be identified using the [U.S. Forest Service’s Seedlot Selection Tool](#) as well as the [Climate-Adapted Seed Tool \(CAST\)](#). Additional resources are linked in [Appendix B](#).

Reforestation of recently burned areas is also eligible for funding, including planning, site preparation, and planting; fire suppression repair costs are not eligible.

The Forest Health program does not fund afforestation or the establishment of forests in historically non-forested areas.

Please note that grant applications for the Forest Health Post-Fire Reforestation & Regeneration grant may ONLY include Reforestation activities and Biomass Utilization activities directly related to reforestation in the project proposal. See Appendix B for additional details for this funding.

- **Biomass Utilization** – Eligible activities must: 1) utilize woody biomass for wood products such as post and pole, firewood, dimensional lumber, plywood, or other products that allow for continued carbon storage; 2) generate energy through combustion or gasification, which displaces carbon-intensive fossil fuel-based energy; or 3) utilize woody biomass to help develop markets for beneficial uses of the material. Beneficial uses include, but are not limited to, dimensional lumber, animal bedding, biochar, artistic and cultural products, cross-laminated timber, mulch, oriented strandboard, pulp, post, shredding, and veneer products.

Business development, workforce development, infrastructure building, and research activities are not eligible for Forest Health grant funding, and project budgets should not include line items for these activities. If seeking funding for these types of activities, please visit CAL FIRE’s [Wood Products & Bioenergy](#) and [Forest Health Research](#) program webpages for information. However, applicants are encouraged to provide and budget for high-quality jobs and equitable economic development as part of implementing eligible activities. Such support might include (but need not be limited to) providing benefits and prevailing/living wages to workers, engaging local communities in planning for hiring, or following a strategy for targeting high-quality jobs to low-income or disadvantaged populations. Applicants may describe these efforts in the optional “Jobs” section of the application.

All applications will be screened for eligibility. Applications must be complete and submitted by an eligible applicant in eCivis Portal. Projects should be designed to achieve GHG emissions benefits, must be within size and funding limits, and must be able to be completed within the statutory time limits. Applications that do not meet these criteria will not be scored against the selection criteria and will not be eligible for award. Applicants are strongly advised to ensure

that estimates of the total number of acres where project activities will occur match across the application (e.g., shapefiles do not contradict the "Treatment Tracking" worksheet).

Eligible Organizations and Partners

CAL FIRE will enter into grant agreements with local, state, and federal public agencies; Native American tribes; universities; special districts; industrial and non-industrial private forest landowners; and non-profit organizations.

Applicants should work cooperatively with local partners to implement projects in a coordinated and expedited manner. Collaboration and support can be demonstrated by private and public involvement in the planning, funding, and implementation of the project. Collaboration should leverage resources to achieve an outcome that is larger than the sum of the individual projects that may have been undertaken by each partnering organization independently. Applicants should take care to clearly indicate what work will be completed with funds from this solicitation.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reductions

Forest Health projects must further the regulatory purposes of Division 25.5 commencing with Section 38500 of the Health and Safety Code. In its statutory role, the California Air Resources Board (CARB), has worked cooperatively with CAL FIRE and other experts to develop and approve the Forest Health Quantification Methodology for forest treatment activities, and an accounting strategy for combining the effects of treatment activities and their synergistic effects.

Applicants are not required to calculate the GHG benefits of proposed projects; however, they are required to submit a GHG workbook so that CAL FIRE staff may complete a quantitative estimate of the net GHG benefit of the project in terms of metric tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO_{2e}). Calculations will be completed using the most current version of the [Forest Health Quantification Methodology \(QM\) and Calculator Tool](#). GHG benefit per Forest Health Program funds requested will ultimately be recorded as MTCO_{2e}/\$. Applications that do not include the required documentation may be disqualified.

Some activities, such as planning, outreach, or education, may not have a measurable GHG emissions benefit. Applicants must provide a qualitative description of how these proposed activities will result in emissions reductions, further quantitative assessment of GHG impacts, or improve management actions or policy.

Project Scale

Forest Health projects must focus on large, landscape-scale forestlands composed of one or more landowners, which may cover multiple jurisdictions. Large landscapes will usually include watersheds, fireheds, or larger logical management units. The total project area should aim to be no less than 800 acres in size; landscape units do not have to be contiguous.

Funding Limits

Eligible Forest Health projects must be large, landscape-scale, with multiple benefits. The minimum grant amount requested should be no less than \$750,000. The maximum allowable amount is \$7 million.

Project Readiness

Eligible projects must complete grant-related activities no later than March 31, 2030; it is recommended this be your project end date.

Preference will be given to projects that have documented environmental compliance such as the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) or the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) documents completed before the project application is submitted (See [Appendix F](#)). Applicants must agree to complete all needed environmental compliance work *within one year of award* and must demonstrate progress toward completing the work within six months of award. CAL FIRE will begin to review all awarded projects within 12 months of the grant award and may reallocate awarded funds to a different grantee if environmental compliance is not complete or reasonable progress has not been demonstrated.

Application Scoring

Applicants are required to submit a complete project application including a detailed scope of work, project workplan and timeline, budget, project maps and digital spatial data, supporting documents allowing for a calculation of GHG emission reductions by CAL FIRE staff, and additional supporting documents as listed in the Project Application package described below. Applications should provide clear and internally consistent information (e.g., consistent acreage estimates in the scope of work, project workplan, and spatial data) to demonstrate project and applicant readiness.

Upon the close of the application period, applications will be reviewed to determine if the project meets eligibility requirements. Eligible projects will be scored to determine how well the project fits the purpose and objectives of the Forest Health Program using the Grant Selection Criteria on the following page.

Equal Opportunity

CAL FIRE Forest Health Program is committed to supporting disadvantaged and marginalized communities. This commitment furthers the mission of CAL FIRE to serve and safeguard the people of California, as well as the [CCI legislative mandates](#) to invest in under-resourced communities and communities particularly vulnerable to climate change. Applicants are invited to describe how implementation of grant funds may elevate historically under-represented populations.

Grant Selection Criteria

These criteria are specific to Forest Health and Post-Fire Reforestation and Regeneration grant applications.

Grant applications will be scored as to how well the project fits the purpose and objectives of the Forest Health Program, using the following criteria.

Project Background and Scope of Work – 15 points

The Project Background section of the application captures the project background and addresses the following:

- Statement of Need
 - Please identify the needs of the project area and how they will be addressed.
- Regional History/Conditions
 - Please describe any relevant historical events or environmental conditions that may have contributed to the need for the project.
- Past Management Practices
 - Please describe any past management practices in the project area that have created conditions that may now require intervention.

The Scope of Work justifies how the project is appropriate for the program and includes a clear, complete articulation of the work to be completed. The Scope of Work addresses the following:

- Project Deliverables
 - Describes the proposed project activities including on-the-ground treatments and other expected project deliverables/milestones. Applicants are expected to have a comprehensive project with explicit details on deliverables/milestone including the location and prescription of all proposed treatment types.
- Environmental Compliance
 - Describes any existing or needed permits or regulatory approvals needed to meet environmental compliance in order to complete the project. Ensure the Environmental Compliance worksheet on the Forest Health Project Workbook corroborates that narrative. If CEQA compliance is not complete at the time of application submittal, the CEQA lead agency must be identified and the applicant must include a Letter of Commitment from that public agency with responsibility to complete the necessary CEQA documentation within one year of award with application submittal.

- If applicant is requesting CAL FIRE to act as CEQA lead agency or if the CEQA lead agency has not been identified, consultation with Forest Health Environmental Compliance staff is required prior to application submission. If applicant is requesting CAL FIRE to act as CEQA Lead Agency and does not consult with Forest Health Environmental Compliance staff prior to submission, the application may be deemed incomplete. Consultation during the application stage will include at a minimum:
 - Proposed grant project description, anticipated level of CEQA analysis/document required, proposed budget to complete the necessary CEQA analysis and review of CAL FIRE contractor expectations.

The Scope of Work must be in an MS Word or PDF document limited to 2 pages, single spaced, using 11-point or greater, Arial font.

Project Work Plan – 5 points

The Work Plan worksheet in the Forest Health Project Workbook is complete with appropriate detail describing the phases of work necessary to successfully implement the project. It is feasible for all phases of work to be completed before the end of the project performance period. The work plan reflects the project deliverables from the Scope of Work.

If the proposed project is a continuation of, or related to, a current CAL FIRE Forest Health Grant, the Work Plan should show the transition of currently funded activities to proposed activities.

Budget – 10 points

The application budget is complete and clearly depicts how grant funds will be spent by spending type. The total grant requested funds match between the application form and the application budget. The Treatment Tracking worksheet in the [Forest Health Project Workbook](#) is complete and specifies the treatments areas, ownership type, jurisdiction, treatment objective, treatment activity, treatment acres, broad vegetation type, and funds to be spent by treatment area. Requested funds shall be no less than \$750,000 and no more than \$7 million.

The budget depicts how costs are reasonable for the proposed treatments, deliverables, and Scope of Work. The budget specifies the number of salaried employees and contractors to be funded under the grant and the cost basis for each. Consideration should be given to including costs for environmental compliance, adequate and thorough reporting to CAL FIRE, and GIS support to provide digital spatial treatment data to CAL FIRE. The budget must identify anticipated income received from the sale

of forest products or other income generated from the project and how those funds will be reinvested in the project.

Applicants must provide a project budget narrative. The budget narrative allows for additional justification of how or why a budget line item helps to meet the project deliverable. The project budget narrative must be in an MS Word or PDF document limited to one page, single spaced, using 11-point or greater, Arial font.

Long-Term Forest Management Goals – 5 points

Project activities should be conducted pursuant to an approved timber harvest plan, nonindustrial timber management plan, working forest management plan, or appropriate exemptions. CAL FIRE will give funding priority to landowners with a plan or demonstrated interest in developing or maintaining a resilient forest of diverse age, size, and species class within the boundaries of the project. A long-term maintenance plan for the project should identify responsible parties, funding, and partner assistance.

Net Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Benefit – 10 points

While applicants are not required to calculate the GHG benefits of proposed projects, the application must include a completed GHG workbook that CAL FIRE Forest Health staff will use to make a quantitative estimate of the net GHG benefit of the project in terms of metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO₂e). Applications that do not include the required documentation may be disqualified.

Forest Health staff will perform a thorough assessment of project activities as related to past calculations of those activities on similar lands. Preference will be given to projects that are estimated to have significant GHG benefits.

Priority Landscapes – 5 points

The project addresses forestlands where there is a demonstrated need for treatment and where projects will have significant benefit.

CAL FIRE's Fire and Resource Assessment Program (FRAP) has developed a [Priority Landscape web map viewer](#) that can be used to assess whether a proposed project is located in a high-priority landscape in which specific actions can be taken to reduce risk to a forest asset. Those actions include: 1) Reducing Wildfire Risks to Ecosystem Services, 2) Restoring Fire Damaged Areas, 3) Restoring Pest and Drought Damaged Areas, and 4) Reducing Wildfire Threat to Communities. Applicants should briefly describe which priority area(s) they will be working in and how work will reduce risk to the asset in that area. The number of acres within these priority areas on which project work would occur is one of many factors that may be considered in selecting applications for award.

Climate refugia may also be considered as a priority landscape. Applicants must describe the source of climate refugia identification and how proposed treatments will enhance refugia characteristics.

Project Benefits – 5 points

California Climate Investments support socio-economic, environmental, and public health co-benefits.

The application must include a brief description of the project's co-benefits. Potential co-benefits include, but are not limited to, reduced fire risk or facilitated fire suppression; bioenergy or wood products produced; biomass diverted from landfill; improved air or water quality; improved watershed health; protected water supplies; improved wildlife, fish, or native plant habitat; reduced invasive species; increased recreation, education, or outreach opportunities; improved scenic resources; protected cultural resources; traditional ecological knowledge engaged; improved soil health; benefits to local economy; benefits to local culture; agricultural benefits; climate adaptation; or pursuit of environmental justice.

Jobs – 5 points (Optional)

Applicants may distinguish their projects by demonstrating that jobs supported by the grant would contribute to California objectives for workforce development and distribution of benefits to low-income or disadvantaged populations.

Up to 5 points may be awarded to applications that provide information relating to project outcomes and design such as:

- any jobs that would provide a prevailing or local living wage (regardless of whether a prevailing wage requirement applies) or benefits,
- community engagement or review of available data to identify needs that can be met through jobs associated with the project, and
- a strategy to target jobs to populations defined by the state as low-income or disadvantaged.

Applicants who opt to submit information evaluated for this section will demonstrate proposed project job benefits through multiple-choice questions and brief narrative descriptions in the application form. (No financial records or employment records are requested to be submitted for this section of the application, and only information that complies with applicable confidentiality protections is solicited.) Among various aspects, scoring will consider the distribution and expected magnitude of impacts (e.g., the estimated average wages to be paid for the lowest-paid job classifications, or the budget proportion that is proposed to fund jobs with prevailing or local living wages that would be targeted to low-income or disadvantaged populations). The main basis for this assessment approach may be found in the [California Air Resources Board Priority Populations Benefit Criteria Table](#).

Disadvantaged or Low-Income Community Benefit – 10 points

Forest Health prioritizes projects that include and benefit residents of disadvantaged communities, low-income communities, and low-income households (collectively, “priority populations”).

Applicants must complete application questions adapted from the CCI Land Restoration and Forest Health Priority Populations Benefit Criteria Table document ([Appendix G](#)) to determine if the project 1) is more than 50% located within a census tract/land identified as a disadvantaged community or low-income community, 2) is responding to an important community or household need that has been identified; and 3) will provide priority population(s) direct, meaningful, and assured benefits that will address the identified need(s). (Note: If a proposed project does not meet all these conditions, this does not imply that the project is ineligible for a CCI grant. A large portion of Forest Health grant funding has historically been awarded to projects that do not meet these conditions. For reference, in the Fiscal Year 2022-23 Forest Health solicitation, about 50% of eligible applications received were awarded points for disadvantaged or low-income community benefits.)

If a project area is not more than 50% in a designated low-income community census tract or disadvantaged community area, additional description of priority population benefits that the project is expected to provide will also be evaluated in scoring. Descriptions should be specific and well-substantiated.

Consistent with statute and California Air Resources Board (CARB) guidance, CAL FIRE uses the provided tools for identifying low-income and disadvantaged populations recognized for the purposes of CCI administration as “priority populations.” Guidance is available in the [Appendix](#) on determining whether a project is more than 50% in a designated disadvantaged or low-income community.

If the [CCI priority populations map](#) does not show all the lands under control of a federally recognized Tribe, that Tribe may request a consultation to identify other lands by contacting CalEPA Office of the Deputy Secretary for Environmental Justice, Tribal Affairs, and Border Relations at TribalAffairs@calepa.ca.gov.

Applicants proposing work with potentially adverse impacts, such as smoke, must explain how disproportionate impacts to priority populations would be avoided.

The following factors will be considered in awarding points for benefits to priority populations:

1. Clarity and specificity of responses to the relevant application questions, as well as documentation of support within letters or emails if available.
2. Demonstration of inclusion of priority populations in leadership, partnership, and outreach.
3. Responses to the Community Engagement Questionnaire (please see the “Collaboration, Community Engagement and Local Support” section, below).

Local Fire Plan & Other State Plan Compatibility – 5 points

The project is part of other wildfire planning processes including the 2018 Strategic Fire Plan for California, local CAL FIRE Unit fire plans, or Community Wildfire Protection Plans. Projects should demonstrate how their activities are consistent with or in support of other statewide climate initiatives, landscape conservation efforts and other state actions plans such as the California Forest Carbon Plan, Safeguarding California Plan, Natural and Working Lands Climate Change Implementation Plan, California's Wildfire and Forest Resilience Action Plan, CA Wildlife Action Plan, CA Water Action Plan, Habitat Conservation Plans, or Natural Community Conservation Plans.

Collaboration, Community Engagement and Local Support – 10 points

The project demonstrates a thorough and holistic understanding of community resources, assets, needs, and vulnerabilities; how these local and regional characteristics inform the objectives of the project; and how broad and diverse collaboration among project partners is responsive to these specific characteristics and objectives.

Collaboration and support are demonstrated by private and public partnerships in the coordination of regional objectives and strategies, planning, decision-making, funding, and implementation of the project. CAL FIRE will favor projects that provide a direct benefit to a community and meaningfully address an important community need. Leadership, partnership, or support from communities historically under-represented in forestry may be recognized in the application. Letters of support from other CAL FIRE programs are not appropriate.

Match funding is not a requirement of applying for a Forest Health grant. However, match funding illustrates that a project has support from other entities and may help make a proposed project more competitive. Please enter any match funding for the proposed project in the application budget as well as the application questions pertaining to match funding. It is important to list any other potential or secured Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund (GGRF) or California Climate Investments (CCI) funding.

Applicants must refer to CCI's [Co-benefit Assessment Methodology for Community Engagement](#) and complete the Community Engagement Questionnaire to determine how the project demonstrates public participation in planning, design, and implementation occurs in ways that foster community access, deliberation, and leadership. Additionally, responses relating to community engagement in the "Jobs" and "Disadvantaged or Low-Income Community Benefit" sections will be weighed.

Grantee's Administrative Capacity and Past Forest Management History – 10 points

The Applicant has demonstrated capacity to administer a sizable grant with numerous partners. The Applicant has demonstrated ability to complete land management activities. The Applicant or the applicant's team has demonstrated forest management

experience with similar landscape-level projects and demonstrates a high potential for completing the project. Greater consideration will be given to organizations with a team that has the ability to administratively manage large grants and that has a proven record of success in delivering projects like that proposed in the application.

If the Applicant is a prior CAL FIRE Forest Health grantee (or major contributing partner), the Applicant must be up to date on all grant reporting and have demonstrated substantial progress towards accomplishing the existing grant activities and objectives. Maintenance on past Forest Health grant-funded activities shall be demonstrated through a maintenance plan, which must be described clearly within the Scope of Work as well as the Work Plan worksheet and Project Budget Narrative.

CAL FIRE recognizes that applicants may have varying capacity for providing spatial data that meet application requirements. For technical assistance with questions or concerns when preparing spatial data for an application after reviewing available guidance, please contact the program at ForestHealth@fire.ca.gov. If a request for technical assistance is received it will be addressed as promptly as possible, however it is recommended to start requests early in the solicitation period to assure your request can be accommodated. The program will not be able to create shapefiles for applicants but can provide clarification and support, as feasible. Effective use of technical assistance (and appropriate budgeting to ensure capacity to meet reporting requirements) will not count against an application in scoring of applicant administrative capacity.

Readiness and Legal Requirements – 10 points

“Readiness” is the ability to implement the project and the capability to begin ground disturbing activities on the project within 12 months of the grant award. A Registered Professional Forester or NASP-Certified Silviculturist must oversee vegetation treatments and removal pursuant to Public Resources Code section 750 *et seq.*

Grantees must comply with all applicable environmental laws and regulations when implementing projects funded by this grant, including but not limited to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), (California Public Resources Code § 21000 *et seq.*) or the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), 42 USC §4321 *et seq.* Applicants must complete the “Environmental Compliance” worksheet.

All environmental permitting must be completed within *one year* of the grant agreement being fully executed (See [Appendix F](#)). Preference will be given to projects that are ready to implement, with all required documents and legal requirements such as CEQA, NEPA, landowner access agreements, permits, ancillary contracts, and agreements in place. If CEQA compliance is not complete at the time of application submittal, the CEQA lead agency must be identified in the application and the applicant must include a Letter of Commitment from that lead agency to complete all necessary CEQA documentation within one year of the grant agreement being fully executed.

An applicant that is not a public agency¹ must consult with Climate & Energy environmental compliance staff before submitting an application if: (1) a CEQA lead

agency² has not been identified; (2) the applicant requests CAL FIRE to act as the CEQA lead agency; or (3) the applicant expects the project to be exempt from CEQA and requests CAL FIRE to prepare and file the CEQA Notice of Exemption. Such consultation must, at a minimum, include:

1. Proposed project description, proposed environmental compliance document(s), budget, and schedule.
2. Review of CAL FIRE and grantee contractor performance expectations, which include, but are not limited to:
 - a. contractor has the necessary experience required to complete the CEQA analysis within one year of grant execution;
 - b. contractor is familiar with CAL FIRE's procedures & templates;
 - c. contractor will fully address CAL FIRE edits and comments, as CEQA lead agency, during environmental compliance and CEQA document review in a timely manner to allow for finalization and approval of CEQA document to be on schedule; and
 - d. grantee will ensure that the environmental compliance document is in Final Draft format utilizing CAL FIRE's procedures and most current templates and will submit the environmental compliance document for CAL FIRE review and approval. As CEQA lead agency, CAL FIRE requires at a **minimum 90 days** to review and approve non-exempt CEQA projects. *As part of the consultation process, CAL FIRE environmental compliance staff can provide guidance and help ensure the consultant will be able to meet CAL FIRE's expectations and complete the necessary analysis, but it is ultimately up to the grantee to meet CAL FIRE's grant requirements, which includes CEQA compliance within one year of the execution of the grant agreement and prior to commencing any on-the-ground work.*

An applicant's failure to consult with Climate & Energy environmental compliance staff as required by this section before submitting an application may result in the application being deemed incomplete and ineligible for funding.

¹Per PRC § 21063 "Public agency" includes any state agency, board, or commission, any county, city and county, city, regional agency, public district, redevelopment agency, or other political subdivision.

²Per PRC § 21067 "Lead agency" means the public agency which has the principal responsibility for carrying out or approving a project which may have a significant effect upon the environment.

APPENDIX B - POST-FIRE REFORESTATION AND REGENERATION APPLICATIONS

Introduction

The state budget includes \$50 million for the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) to administer Post-Fire Reforestation and Regeneration projects within the state of California. Up to \$50 million of the allocated funding will be awarded through the Forest Health Program through a competitive grant solicitation.

Eligibility and Requirements

Forest Health Post-Fire Reforestation and Regeneration applications have the same eligibility requirements as Forest Health applications, as described in [Appendix A](#), except for the following:

Eligible grant project activities are limited to reforestation treatments, including site preparation and post-planting maintenance that is directly related to reforestation. The intent of the proposed treatments must be to reforest or restore forestland following catastrophic fire. Reforestation treatments include, but are not limited, to: (1) tree planting; (2) installing tree shelters; (3) site preparation; (4) oak woodland restoration; (5) invasive plant removal; or (6) herbicide application.

The applicant must explain how the project will restore climate-resilient natural conditions. The project must prioritize native species and a density and distribution of seedlings that address emergency climate conditions, including increased fire and drought, consistent with recommendations from the Governor's Wildfire and Forest Resilience Task Force's Reforestation Working Group.

Statutory Requirements and Priorities

General Requirements

Grantees must comply with all applicable environmental laws and regulations when implementing projects funded by this grant, including but not limited to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), (California Public Resources Code § 21000 et seq.) or the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), 42 USC §4321 et seq.

Projects eligible for funding from this grant may be emergency projects that are exempt from CEQA under Public Resources Code section 21080(b)(3) and CEQA Guidelines section 15269(a). A Grantee who determines their project is exempt from CEQA still must comply with the environmental compliance requirements detailed in Appendix F. CAL FIRE can assist applicants in determining whether projects are exempt from the requirements of CEQA prior to application submission.

Selection Process, Evaluation and Scoring Criteria

The [selection, evaluation, and scoring criteria](#) of a Forest Health Post-Fire Reforestation and Regeneration Grant application are the same as for a Forest Health project application, as described in Appendix A.

Resources

CAL FIRE's Reforestation Services Program (RSP) and the Wildfire and Forest Resilience Reforestation working group has compiled these [Reforestation Resources](#), which may be useful in developing your project.

APPENDIX C- EXPLANATION OF TERMS

TERM	EXPLANATION
Agreement	A legally binding agreement between the State and another entity.
Amendment	A formal modification or a material change of the agreement, such as the Project Performance Period, budget, or scope of work.
Application	The form identified as Attachment A and supporting attachments for grants required by the enabling legislation or program, or both.
Authorized Representative	The designated position identified in a resolution as the agent to sign all required grant documents including, but not limited to, grant agreements, application forms and payment requests.
CEQA	The California Environmental Quality Act is a law establishing policies and procedures requiring agencies to identify, disclose to decision makers and the public, and attempt to lessen significant impacts to environmental resources that may occur as a result of a proposed project.
Contractor	An entity contracting with the grantee for services and generally receives a Form 1099 for tax purposes.
Employee	Individuals employed directly by the grantee and generally receives a W-2 for tax purposes.
Forestland	As in Public Resources Code § 4793, land at least 10% occupied by trees of any size that are native to California.
Indirect Costs	Expenses of doing business that are of a general nature and are incurred to benefit at least two or more functions within an organization. These costs are not usually identified specifically with a grant, grant agreement, project or activity, but are necessary for the general operation of the organization. Indirect costs include salaries and benefits of employees not directly assigned to a project, which provide functions such as personnel, business, information technology or janitorial services, and salaries of supervisors and managers. Indirect costs may only be applied as a % of direct costs, except equipment, within the agreement.

Modification	An informal agreement that moves dollars within a line-item, between line items not to exceed 10% of either budget line item total, makes a change in deliverable due dates, or makes a minor change in the work of a grant agreement. It does not require a formal amendment of the grant agreement.
Net GHG Benefit	The sum of the GHG emission reductions and sequestration less any GHG emissions resulting from project implementation.
Non-profit Organization	Any California corporation organized under Section 501(c)(3) of the Federal Internal Revenue Code.
Operating Expenses (Direct Cost)	Any cost that can be specifically identified as generated by, and in accordance with, the provisions or activity requirements of the grant agreement.
Payee Data Record (Std. 204)	A form required to establish a supplier number to encumber funds and subsequent payment.
Project Performance Period	The Project Performance Period is from the time the Grant Agreement is fully signed to the Agreement termination date. Only eligible costs incurred during the project performance period will be paid by the State.
Project	The activity, activities, or work to be accomplished utilizing grant and matching funds (if applicable).
Project Income	Income received by the grantee directly generated by the activities directly funded by the grant award.
Project Scope of Work	The detailed description of the proposed tasks identified in Attachment A, as described in enabling legislation and detailed in the grant agreement.
Project Budget Detail	The proposed detailed budget plan identifying costs to be funded by the grant, matching funds, and projected program income broken down by budget category.
Resolution	A signed resolution by the grantee's governing body, which identifies individual(s) authorized to act on behalf of the grantee's governing body for the grant project.

Worksheet #2: Work Plan

Complete with appropriate detail describing the phases of work necessary to successfully implement the project.



CAL FIRE Forest Health Program
California Climate Investments
Work Plan Sheet

Instructions

1. Every treatment number in Treatment_Tracking must be included in Work_Plan.
2. Add key non-ground-disturbing tasks that will be conducted within the project scope.
3. Use "in progress" to indicate that work will be actively underway but not completed during a given quarter, and use "Complete" to show that work will finish during a given quarter.

Treatment Number or Major Milestone	Ground-Disturbing Activity OR Non-Ground-Disturbing Task	Q4 2022	Q1 2023	Q2 2023	Q3 2023	Q4 2023	Q1 2024	Q2 2024	Q3 2024	Q4 2024
		Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun
1	Planning			In progress	In progress	In progress	In progress	Complete		
1	Contracting							In progress	In progress	
1	Site prep by machine pile								In progress	In progress
1	Planting									
Field Data Collection	Planning		In progress	Complete						
Field Data Collection	Hiring			Complete						
Field Data Collection	Data Collection				In progress	Complete				
Field Data Collection	Sample preparation and analysis					In progress	In progress	Complete		

Worksheet #3: Environmental Compliance



CAL FIRE Forest Health Program
California Climate Investments
Environmental Compliance Sheet

Instructions

Enter the Treatment Number as listed on the Treatment Tracking Sheet. Complete the or for each treatment number.

Treatment Number	Lead Agency	Federal Environmental Compliance Document Required?	Document to Be Used for Federal Requirement	Document Status If Federal compliance document not required, put "NA."	Date Filed	Document Expiration Date	2021 SB 901 Waiver Used?	Document to Be Used for State Requirement	Document #	Document Status If state compliance document not required, put "NA."	Contractor for Document Preparation	Date Filed	Document Expiration Date	Notes (Optional)

Worksheet #4: Jobs (Optional)



CAL FIRE Forest Health Program
California Climate Investments
Jobs Sheet



Instructions for Jobs Information

Please list all proposed grant-funded jobs and answer the following questions for each:

1. For each job title/classification/role:
 - A) Applicant verified the job title/classification/role would be paid the prevailing wage (regardless of whether prevailing wage requirements apply).
 - B) Applicant verified the job title/classification/role would be paid at least a local living wage. Unless and until the California Air Resources Board or CAL FIRE adopt alternate guidance, please refer to the "living wage" definition [here](#) and the living wage calculator [here](#).
 - C) Both A and B.
 - D) Applicant declined to answer.
2. For each job title/classification/role:
 - A) Applicant determined that a formal targeted hiring strategy* is in place and would be followed to target job opportunities to persons meeting the [CCI definition of a "priority population."](#) (Note: If hiring has already occurred, then answer this question based on whether a formal targeted hiring strategy was followed for targeting the job to a priority population(s).)
 - B) Applicant determined that a formal targeted hiring strategy* would NOT be followed to target job opportunities to persons meeting the [CCI definition of a "priority population."](#) (Note: If hiring has already occurred, then answer this question based on whether a formal targeted hiring strategy was followed for targeting the job to a priority population(s).)
 - C) Applicant declined to state whether a formal targeted hiring strategy would be followed.

*Only a **documented** targeted hiring strategy will be recognized as a formal targeted hiring strategy. The strategy may be documented in a stand-alone document or as part of a document. Examples include but are not limited to a Community Benefits Agreement (CBA), a labor agreement, a community workforce provision or other targeted hiring provision in a contract, or a policy of working with a partner(s) well-placed to promote project job opportunities to members of a specific priority population(s). Following the law (for example, as relates to non-discrimination) is not in and of itself considered as a hiring strategy. The strategy must include planned action to direct opportunities to a specific priority population(s). It does not apply to any hiring conducted prior to when the document was implemented. A targeted hiring strategy is **not** required to guarantee that a minimum number of job positions will be filled by a priority population member(s).

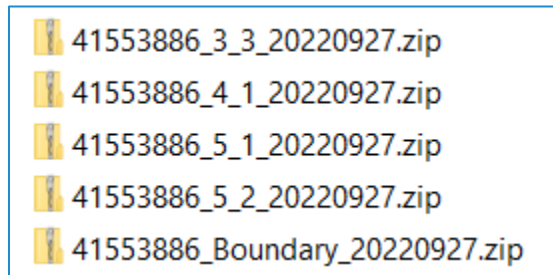
JOBS INFORMATION

Job Title/Classification/Role	Units (# hours)	Rate (\$/hour)	CAL FIRE Grant Share	Question 1	Question 2
Example 1 - Project Manager	50	\$50.00	\$2,500.00	A	A
Example 2 - Field Technician	100	\$20.00	\$2,000.00	C	A
Example 3 - Field Supervisor	50	\$30.00	\$1,500.00	C	A
Example 4 - Burn Boss	75	\$30.00	\$2,250.00	B	B

APPENDIX E- SPATIAL DATA

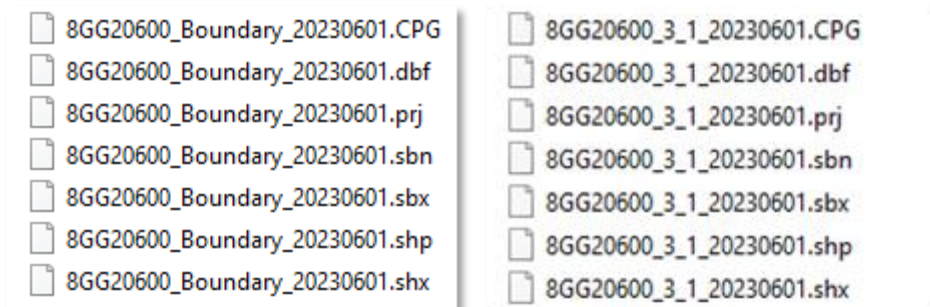
General Requirements for All Spatial Data Submittals

1. Format: Shapefile (KMZ or GDB will not be accepted.)
2. Coordinate reference system: NAD_1983_California_Teale_albers (EPSG: 3310)
3. Note file: Include source information, methodology, and other relevant details, if any, in a note file and place it in a zipped folder with the shapefile.
4. Separate zipped folders for each shapefile: One for the project boundary and one for each treatment activity boundary, as shown below.



For example, if a project has 15 individual treatment components listed on the Treatment Tracking sheet of the progress report (i.e., a total of 15 rows of information in the Ground-Disturbing Activity Information table), there should be a total of 16 zipped shapefile folders submitted: one zipped folder for the project boundary and 15 separate zipped files for the 15 different treatment components listed on the Treatment Tracking sheet in the progress report.

5. Within each zipped shapefile folder, please provide all associated file extensions as shown below. It is OK if there are extra files such as .shp.xml.



Types of Shapefiles

Please include a project boundary shapefile, and a separate shapefile for each of the treatment components (rows) listed in the Treatment Tracking sheet in the progress report, as follows.

Project Boundary Shapefile

1. The project boundary shapefile should have only one feature. The project boundary can be a multipart feature in the case of dispersed treatment areas.
2. The shapefile should as closely as possible define the footprint, or total unique acres, on which ground-disturbing activity will take place (in a shapefile showing planned work) or has taken place (in a shapefile representing completed work), within the project scope. It is important to exclude any “dead” or “skip-over” or areas to give an accurate map of where ground-disturbing work occurs. Please be sure to exclude any “impact areas” where benefits are expected to result, but ground-disturbing work is not directly implemented. There should be no overlapping areas, and the project boundary acreage should not exceed the cumulative treatment activity polygons acres. In summary, the project boundary shapefile should be one feature that covers all and only the areas on which the grant project conducts ground-disturbing work.
3. Please submit your project boundary shapefile with the following naming convention.

eCivisApplicationNumber_Boundary_Date.zip (**Date format: YYYYMMDD**)
Example: 41553886_Boundary_20231109.zip

4. The attribute table for the project boundary shapefile must include these fields: eCivis Application Number, Project Name, Grantee, [Calculated] Acres (see example below).

FID	Shape	AppNumber	Proj_Name	Grantee	Acres	
1	0	Polygon ZM	41553886	Sierra Nevada Adaptive Management Experiment	Board of Regents, Uni...	1676.787447
Click to add new row.						

Treatment Activity Shapefiles

Each project will have multiple treatment component or activity shapefiles.

1. Each row in the table must have exactly one ownership type and one responsibility area ("jurisdiction"). If one activity will take place in an area that spans multiple ownership types, then it will be necessary to break the area into smaller parts so that each part has only one ownership type; then each smaller area will be entered in its own row. The same is true of responsibility areas (FRA, SRA, and LRA designations).
2. The number of treatment activity shapefiles must match the number of treatment components (rows) listed in the Treatment Tracking sheet of the progress report. For

example, if the Treatment Tracking sheet lists 15 different treatment activities (one activity per row, across a total of 15 rows), there must be 15 treatment activity shapefiles.

3. Each treatment activity boundary should only have one feature; it can be a multipart feature if treatment areas are dispersed.
4. All treatment activities must fall within the project boundary footprint.
5. Each treatment activity shapefile should include the associated treatment component number (TCN) as listed on the Treatment Tracking worksheet in the project workbook.
6. Each treatment activity shapefile must have one and only one responsibility area (“jurisdiction”). Please see the “Determining Jurisdiction” section below for requirements and guidance.
7. Please submit your treatment activity boundary shapefiles with the following naming convention.

eCivisApplicationNumber_TreatmentNumber_Date.zip (**Date format: YYYYMMDD**)
 Example: 41553886_1_1_20231109.zip

8. The attribute table for the treatment activity boundary shapefiles must include these fields: TN (treatment number), eCivis Application Number, Treatment Name, Ownership Type, Jurisdiction, Treatment Objective, Vegetation Type, [Calculated] Acres (see example below).

	Treatment Number	eCivis Application Nu...	Treatment Name	Ownership Type	Jurisdiction	Treatment Objective	Vegetation Type	Acres	Activity
1	1.1	41553886	North Complex SPI	Private (industrial forestr	SRA	Reforestation	Timber	2.9	Tree Planting

Blank Shapefile Templates

1. Please [click here](#) to download an empty shapefile zip file to use for submitting project boundary shapefile.
2. Please [click here](#) to download an empty shapefile zip file for submitting treatment activity shapefiles.

Templates can also be found in the Spatial Data- Shapefiles section of the [Forest Health Grantee Resources](#) webpage.

Determining Jurisdiction

When providing shapefiles of treatment activities, each treatment activity polygon must fall entirely within one responsibility area (“jurisdiction”): Federal Responsibility Area (FRA), State Responsibility Area (SRA), or Local Responsibility (LRA).

CAL FIRE's Fire and Resource Assessment Program (FRAP) maintains a GIS responsibility area layer publicly available online. Using this layer is necessary to ensure polygons do not span multiple responsibility areas.

Grantees may view the layer while first drawing polygons, or to check polygons drawn in the field (for example, if problems with connectivity might affect the accuracy of map work in remote locations). Below are tips on using the layer.

1. Download the California State Responsibility Area 2022 geodatabase under the Land Ownership and Administration section from [FRAP GIS Mapping and Data Analytics](#).
2. Load the geodatabase into a survey application (e.g., Avenza, Collector, or Survey123) to use it offline while in the field.
3. Apply spatial join (one-to-many) or overlay (intersection) tools by using the responsibility area and the activity shapefile in GIS software (e.g., ArcMap).
4. The resultant dataset will produce a new shapefile that has a combination of activity attributes with responsibility area attributes.
5. If an activity shape falls into multiple responsibility areas, then there will be multiple rows, each with a different responsibility area, for the one activity. Then:
 - a. Correct any drawing errors found that could eliminate inaccurate overlapping by the polygon of more than one responsibility area.
 - b. If the correctly drawn activity polygon still covers more than one responsibility area, the polygon will need to be broken into multiple polygons so that each polygon falls into only one responsibility area. In this case, add a row in the Treatment Tracking sheet (in the progress report form) for each new activity polygon.

At the end, there should be a one-to-one relationship: one activity, one row in the Treatment Tracking sheet, one activity polygon

APPENDIX F– ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE

NOTE: Grantee must submit proof of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) or National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) compliance within *one year* of the execution of the grant agreement to [Forest Health Environmental Compliance Review \(“Forest Health”\)](#). To ensure this occurs in a timely manner, the grantee should contact Climate & Energy environmental compliance staff as soon as possible after receiving the executed agreement. No grant funds shall be spent on any project activity that may have an effect on the environment, including any ground-disturbing activity, without environmental compliance approval from Forest Health.

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Compliance

Project work involving Federal actions must comply with NEPA.

If the requirements of Public Resources Code (PRC) section 4799.05(d)(1) are met, CEQA may not apply to the project. This means that prescribed fire, reforestation, habitat restoration, thinning, or fuel reduction projects undertaken, in whole or in part, on federal lands to reduce the risk of high-severity wildfire that have been reviewed under NEPA may not need additional CEQA analysis. However, CEQA Compliance is still required when using Forest Health grant funds and a CEQA notice of exemption will need to be filed. See Item #5 below.

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Compliance

Within one year of the execution of the grant agreement and prior to commencing any on-the-ground work, CAL FIRE requires proof of adequate compliance with CEQA. This may be accomplished by one or more of the following methods:

1. Notice of exemption filed with the State Clearinghouse or the county clerk in the manner specified in subdivisions (b) and (c) of Section 21108 or subdivisions (b) and (c) of Section 21152.
2. Initial study and negative declaration or mitigated negative declaration and all associated noticing documents filed with the State Clearinghouse or the county clerk.
3. Draft and final environmental impact report and all associated noticing documents filed with the State Clearinghouse or the county clerk.
4. Timber harvesting permit or notice in compliance with the California Forest Practice Act and Rules for projects that undertake timber operations per Public Resources Code § 4527.
5. Finding of no significant impact-decision notice, categorical exclusion- decision memo, or environmental impact statement-record of decision prepared in compliance with the NEPA for projects that are exempt from CEQA pursuant to PRC § 4799.05(d)(1). When using a NEPA document, per section PRC § 4799.05(d)(4)(A), a CEQA notice of exemption needs to be filed with the Office of

Planning and Research and with the county clerk in the county in which the project will be located in the manner specified in subdivisions (b) and (c) of Section 21108 or subdivisions (b) and (c) of Section 21152. The lead agency will also need to post the notice of exemption on its internet website together with a description of where the documents analyzing the environmental impacts of the project under the federal National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 are available for public review.

6. Completed and accepted Project-Specific Analysis (PSA) under the [California Vegetation Treatment Program](#) (CalVTP).

CEQA Exempt Projects

For exempt projects where the grantee is a public agency¹, the grantee, or a willing project partner that is a public agency, must: (a) complete due diligence for an Exempt Project and prepare a notice of exemption; and (b) file the notice of exemption with the State Clearinghouse or the county clerk.

For exempt projects where the grantee is not a public agency (e.g., fire safe council), applicants must consult with Climate & Energy environmental compliance staff before submitting a grant application. See [Appendix A - Readiness and Legal Requirements](#) for details. As discussed during the consultation, the grantee must (a) conduct the necessary record checks/surveys as part of CAL FIRE's due diligence process, and (b) prepare the Environmental Review Report for an Exempt Project in accordance with CAL FIRE's procedures. CAL FIRE will prepare and file the notice of exemption.

CEQA Non-exempt Projects and Lead Agency

For non-exempt projects where the grantee is a public agency the grantee will assume the role of lead agency². The lead agency is responsible for: (a) performing the necessary environmental effects analysis; (b) preparing environmental documents; and (c) filing associated notices. For these projects, CAL FIRE will be a responsible agency, if necessary, and as such will review the lead agency's CEQA documents and any supporting documentation in order to develop its own CEQA findings and make a discretionary decision for a project.

If the applicant or any project partner is not a public agency and is requesting CAL FIRE to act as CEQA lead agency or if CEQA lead agency has not been identified, consultation with Climate & Energy environmental compliance staff is required prior to submitting the application. See [Appendix A - Readiness and Legal Requirements](#) for details. Once the grant is awarded, the grantee should continue to coordinate closely with Climate & Energy environmental compliance staff. For these projects, the grantee will be required to provide information as necessary to ensure compliance with CEQA. This includes conducting the necessary surveys and environmental effects analysis as well as preparation of environmental documents for projects and following CAL FIRE processes. This includes that the environmental compliance document is in Final Draft format ready for CAL FIRE's review and approval utilizing CAL FIRE's procedures and most current templates. Grantees will be responsible for all costs, including the analyses and document preparation so please budget

accordingly, and schedule appropriately for final review and approval of the CEQA document(s). As CEQA lead agency, CAL FIRE requires at a minimum 90 days to review and approve non-exempt CEQA projects. It is the grantee's responsibility to meet CAL FIRE's grant requirements, which includes CEQA compliance within one year of the execution of the grant agreement and prior to commencing any on-the-ground work.

Grantees should ensure they ask for adequate funds for environmental work when applying for grants. When preparing their budgets, grantees should consider the need to contract with appropriate resource professionals to do the necessary environmental effects assessment and document preparation work. This may include biologists, professional archaeologists, air quality experts, registered professional foresters, environmental planners, etc.

Note: Per CAL FIRE's procedures, a CAL FIRE Certified Archaeological Surveyor certificate can only be used when CAL FIRE is the lead agency for CEQA. This means that when a grantee is a public agency or another public agency assumes the role of lead agency, the grantee CANNOT use a CAL FIRE Certified Archaeological Surveyor certificate and the grantee will need to utilize appropriate archeological professionals to complete this work. Please budget accordingly.

For all environmental documents where CAL FIRE is the lead agency, except timber harvesting permits or notices, cultural resources must be assessed per the procedures outlined in [Cultural Resources Review Procedures for CAL FIRE Projects](#). This may require the project proponent to consult with the appropriate CAL FIRE archaeologist to determine if impacts to cultural resources are possible and what, if any, assessment or mitigation work will have to be done. This consultation should be done as early in the planning process as possible.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE REVIEW

CAL FIRE will review all environmental documents and associated notices for adequate compliance with applicable procedures and CEQA.

Prior to any project activity that may have an effect on the environment, *including any ground-disturbing activity*, using grant funds, grantees must receive written approval from Forest Health confirming that CEQA compliance has been met. This includes when the grantee is planning on using a Timber harvesting permit or notice in compliance with the California Forest Practice Act and Rules for projects that undertake timber operations per PRC § 4527. Even though the grantee may have a validated Forest Practice document from CAL FIRE, the document still needs *Environmental Compliance review* by Climate & Energy. Please email all document reviews/submittals with your grant agreement number included in the subject line to: Forest Health Environmental Compliance Review as early as possible *but no less than six weeks* before you expect field work to begin. As discussed above, more time is required if CAL FIRE assumes role of lead agency. For details on what is required, please see [Environmental Compliance Review Instructions](#).

PROJECT REPORTING

Per Public Resource Code (PRC) section 4137, subdivisions (d) and (f), grantees must maintain records, provide links to relevant documents, and [report](#) annually as requested by CAL FIRE the following:

- 1) What permitting mechanism was used for each project;
- 2) A description of any maintenance plan or other mechanism, if available, that is in place to support maintenance of vegetation improvements over time; and
- 3) A description of any mitigation required for each project, and whether the mitigation has been completed.

These requirements extend to federal actions and projects exempt from CEQA per PRC section 4799.05(d).

APPENDIX G– PRIORITY POPULATIONS

California Climate Investments

[2018 Funding Guidelines](#)

Benefit Criteria Table

Project Type:

LAND RESTORATION AND FOREST HEALTH



California Climate Investments are required to meet minimum levels of investments to projects that benefit residents of disadvantaged communities, low-income communities, and low-income households, collectively referred to as “priority populations.”

All projects counting toward the statutory investment minimums must be located within an identified community and benefit individuals living within that community, or directly benefit residents of low-income households anywhere in the State. Administering agencies must determine if a project meets the criteria for providing direct, meaningful, and assured benefits to priority populations using the following evaluation approach:

Step 1: Identify the Priority Population(s). Be located within a census tract identified as a disadvantaged community or low-income community, or directly benefit residents of a low-income household;

Step 2: Address a Need. Meaningfully address an important community or household need for the disadvantaged community, low-income community, or low-income household; and

Step 3: Provide a Benefit. Using the evaluation criteria, identify at least one direct, meaningful, and assured benefit that the project provides to priority populations. The benefit provided must directly address the identified need.

Only investments that meet these criteria will be counted toward achieving the statutory investment minimums identified for priority populations. Administering agencies can fund projects that otherwise provide meaningful benefits, but do not meet these criteria; however, those projects will not be counted toward investment minimums.

The following table includes criteria for administering agencies to use to determine whether projects satisfy each of the three steps. The criteria are designed to enable administering agencies to readily make an objective “yes” or “no” decision about whether a particular project provides a benefit to a priority population.

Administering agencies must use the criteria table that is applicable to the specific project type(s) funded. For complex projects, there may be more than one applicable criteria table. A complete list of available criteria tables is available at: www.arb.ca.gov/cci-fundingguidelines.

Administering agencies must refer to CARB’s Funding Guidelines for direction on how to use the criteria table in program design and implementation, project evaluation, project selection, and reporting (www.arb.ca.gov/cci-fundingguidelines).

**Evaluation Criteria for Providing Benefits to Priority Populations
LAND RESTORATION AND FOREST HEALTH**

Project Type: Projects will increase carbon storage through restoration and management of natural lands.

Projects must satisfy the applicable criteria through Step 3 to be considered to provide direct, meaningful, and assured benefits to priority populations and count toward statutory investment minimums.

Step 1 – Identify the Priority Population(s).¹ Evaluate the project against each of the following criteria. Check all boxes that apply.

Note: For this project type, the majority of the project must be located within a disadvantaged or low-income community census tract.

[California Climate Investments Priority Populations 2022 CES 4.0](#)

- A. Is the project located within the boundaries of a **disadvantaged community census tract**?
- B. Is the project located within the boundaries of a **low-income community census tract**?
- C. Is the project located outside of a disadvantaged community, but **within ½-mile of a disadvantaged community and within a low-income community census tract**?
- D. Is the project located within the boundaries of a **low-income household**?

If a project does not meet at least one of the qualifying criteria in Step 1, the project does not count toward statutory investment minimums and no further evaluation is needed. If the project meets at least one Step 1 criterion, continue the evaluation in Step 2.

Step 2 – Address a Need. Identify an important community or household need and evaluate whether the project provides a benefit that meaningfully addresses that need.

To identify a need that the project will address, agencies and/or applicants can use a variety of approaches:

- A. **Recommended Approach:** Host community meetings, workshops, outreach efforts, or public meetings as part of the planning process to engage local residents and community groups for input on community or household needs, and document how the received input was considered in the design and/or selection of projects to address those needs;
- B. **Recommended Approach:** Receive documentation of support from local community-based organizations and/or residents (e.g., letters, emails) identifying a need that the project addresses and demonstrating that the project has broad community support;

¹ An online mapping tool of identified disadvantaged communities and low-income communities, and a “look-up” tool list of “low-income” thresholds by county and household size are available at: <https://www.arb.ca.gov/cc-communityinvestments>.

Step 2 – Address a Need (continued). Identify an important community or household need and evaluate whether the project provides a benefit that meaningfully addresses that need.

- C. Alternative Approach:** Where direct engagement is infeasible, look at the individual factors in CalEnviroScreen that are most impacting an identified disadvantaged or low-income community (i.e., factors that score above the 75th percentile), and confirm that the project will reduce the impacts of at least one of those factors; or
- D. Alternative Approach:** Where direct engagement is infeasible, refer to the list of common needs for priority populations in CARB’s Funding Guidelines Table 5 and confirm that the project addresses at least one listed need.

Describe identified community or household need(s):

If the project addresses a community or household need as described in Step 2, proceed to Step 3. If the project does not address a community or household need, it will not count toward statutory investment minimums and no further evaluation is needed.

Step 3 – Provide a Benefit. Evaluate the project against each of the following criteria to determine if it provides direct, meaningful, and assured benefits to priority populations. The benefit provided must directly address the identified need.

Project must meet at least one of the following benefit criteria:

- A. Project restores a site that allows public access;
- B. Project significantly reduces flood risk to households within one or more disadvantaged or low-income communities;
- C. Project significantly reduces fire risk to households within one or more disadvantaged or low-income communities;
- D. Project provides regular and ongoing educational opportunities through partnerships with schools or non-profit organizations located in disadvantaged or low-income communities and site access to residents of these communities.

If the project meets the criteria in Steps 1, 2, and 3, it will be considered as providing direct, meaningful, and assured benefits to priority populations and will be counted toward statutory investment minimums.

**California Air Resources Board (CARB)
2018 Funding Guidelines**

Table 5. Examples of Common Needs of Priority Populations

Public Health
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reduce health harms (e.g., asthma) suffered disproportionately by priority populations due to air pollutants. 2. Reduce health harms (e.g., obesity) suffered disproportionately by priority populations due to the built environment (e.g., provide active transportation, parks, playgrounds). 3. Increase community safety. 4. Reduce heat-related illnesses and increase thermal comfort (e.g., weatherization and solar energy can provide more efficient and affordable air-conditioning; urban forestry can reduce heat-island effect). 5. Increase access to parks, greenways, open space, and other community assets.
Economic
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create quality jobs and increase family income (e.g., targeted hiring for living-wage jobs that provide access to health insurance and retirement benefits with long-term job retention, using project labor agreements with targeted hire commitments, community benefit agreements, community workforce agreements, partnerships with community-based workforce development and job training entities, State-certified community conservation corps). 2. Increase job readiness and career opportunities (e.g., workforce development programs, on-the-job training, industry-recognized certifications). 3. Revitalize local economies (e.g., increased use of local businesses) and support California-based small businesses. 4. Reduce housing costs (e.g., affordable housing). 5. Reduce transportation costs (e.g., free or reduced cost transit passes) and improve access to public transportation (e.g., new services in under-served communities). 6. Reduce energy costs for residents (e.g., weatherization, solar). 7. Improve transit service levels and reliability on systems/routes that have high use by disadvantaged and/or low-income community residents or low-income riders. 8. Bring jobs and housing closer together (e.g., affordable housing in transit-oriented development and in healthy, high-opportunity neighborhoods). 9. Preserve community stability and maintain housing affordability for low-income households (e.g., prioritize projects in jurisdictions with anti-displacement policies). 10. Provide educational and community capacity building opportunities through community engagement and leadership.
Environmental
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reduce exposure to local environmental contaminants, such as toxic air contaminants, criteria air pollutants, and drinking water contaminants (e.g., provide a buffer between bike/walk paths and transportation corridors). 2. Prioritize zero-emission vehicle projects for areas with high diesel air pollution, especially around schools or other sensitive populations with near-roadway exposure. 3. Reduce exposure to pesticides in communities near agricultural operations. 4. Greening communities through restoring local ecosystems and planting of native species, improving aesthetics of the landscape, and/or increasing public access for recreation.

Measuring the Intersection(s) of the Proposed Project Area with Designated Priority Population Census Tracts/Lands under Control of a Federally Recognized Tribe

The following is an overview of options for measuring the number of acres of a proposed project area that falls into a designated priority population census tract/area. Other approaches that enable reasonably accurate estimates of these acres are also acceptable. The below is a simple summary of one option that requires GIS knowledge to implement and another option that may be easier to do with less GIS knowledge.

Option 1: Using ArcGIS, download data from the link [here](#). The data show which census tracts/areas are designated as priority population census tracts/areas, as explained on the CARB CCI priority populations map “About & Resources” [webpage](#). Overlap the data with the proposed project boundary. Apply clip tools to calculate the project area part by part, where parts are delineated based on falling into a designated priority population census tract/area or not falling into a designated priority population census tract/area. (i.e., Divide up the project area so that no part falls into both a designated priority population census tract(s)/area(s) and outside of it.) Calculate the total number of project acres that fall into a priority population census tract(s)/area(s), and the total number of acres that do not fall into a priority population census tract(s)/area(s).

Option 2: Using the [California Climate Investments Priority Population 2023 webmap](#), select the “Measure” button, then the option to measure an area. Draw the project area one part at a time, where parts are delineated based on falling into a designated priority population census tract/area or not falling into a designated priority population census tract/area. (i.e., Divide up the project area so that no part falls into both a designated priority population census tract(s)/area(s) and outside of it.) Select acres as the unit. As a polygon is drawn, the area will be calculated. Record the calculated area before moving on to drawing the next part of the project area. Repeat this process until all parts of the project area have been drawn and the associated areas have been calculated. By adding up the areas of these parts, calculate the total number of project acres that fall into a priority population census tract(s)/area(s), and the total number of acres that do not fall into a priority population census tract(s)/area(s). (Note: It is only possible to draw one polygon at a time. Therefore, be sure to record the calculated area of each polygon before moving onto drawing the next.)

APPENDIX H – SAMPLE RESOLUTION

A signed resolution, using the verbiage in this [sample](#), will be required prior to the signing of a Grant Agreement. Applicants are encouraged to submit a draft resolution with the Project application. Resolutions are required from non-profit and local agency applicants only.

<p>RESOLUTION</p> <p>NOTE: DO NOT CHANGE THE FORMAT OR VERBIAGE IN THIS RESOLUTION FORMAT WITHOUT WRITTEN APPROVAL OF CAL FIRE STAFF.</p> <p>Resolution No.: _____</p> <p>RESOLUTION OF THE _____ (Title of Governing Body/City Council/ Board of Supervisor/Board of Directors) OF _____ (City/County/District/non profit) FOR FUNDING FROM THE FOREST HEALTH GRANT PROGRAM AS PROVIDED THROUGH THE CALIFORNIA CLIMATE INVESTMENTS.</p> <p><u>WHEREAS</u>, the Governor of the State of California in cooperation with the California State Legislature has enacted State of California Greenhouse Gas Reduction Funding which provides funds to the State of California and its political subdivisions for Forest Health programs; and</p> <p>WHEREAS, the State Department of Forestry and Fire Protection has been delegated the responsibility for the administration of the program within the State, setting up necessary procedures governing application by local agencies and non-profit organizations under the program, and</p> <p>WHEREAS, said procedures established by the State Department of Forestry and Fire Protection require the applicant to certify by resolution the approval of application before submission of said application to the State; and</p> <p><u>WHEREAS</u>, the applicant will enter into an agreement with the State of California to carry out a Forest Health project;</p> <p>NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the (Title of Governing Body):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Approved the filing of an application for Forest Health grant program funds; and2. Certifies that said applicant has or will have sufficient funds to operate and maintain the project; and,3. Certifies that funds under the jurisdiction of (Governing Body) are available to begin the project.4. Certifies that said applicant will expend grant funds prior to March 30, 2026.5. Appoints (position title), or a designee, as agent of the (Governing Body) to conduct all negotiations, execute and submit all documents including, but not limited to applications, agreements, amendments, payment requests and so on, which may be necessary for the completion of the aforementioned project. <p>Approved and adopted the _____ day of _____, 20____. I, the undersigned, hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution, number _____ was duly adopted by the following roll call vote: <small>(City Council/Board of Supervisor/Board of Directors)</small></p> <p>Ayes: _____ Noes: _____ Absent: _____ _____ (Clerk) Notarized Seal:</p>

APPENDIX I – SAMPLE INVOICE

All Grantees will be required to submit invoices in a format similar to this [sample](#).

Grantee Name		INVOICE		
Street Address		DATE: Month DD, YYYY		
Street Address2		INVOICE #: 1		
City, ST ZIP Code				
Submit invoice and supporting documentation to: California Department of Forestry & Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)				
Grant Number:	XGXXXXXX			
Grant Period:	MM/DD/YYYY	to	MM/DD/YYYY	
Project Name:				
Invoice Reporting Period:	MM/DD/YYYY	to	MM/DD/YYYY	
Payment Type:	<input type="checkbox"/> Advance Request	<input type="checkbox"/> Interim Payment	<input type="checkbox"/> Final Payment	

BUDGET ITEM	BUDGETED AMOUNT	CURRENT COST	EXPENDED TO DATE	CURRENT MATCH
Salaries and Wages	-	-	-	-
Employee Benefits	-	-	-	-
Contractual	-	-	-	-
Travel	-	-	-	-
Supplies	-	-	-	-
Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other	-	-	-	-
Indirect Cost (Exclude Equipment) 12%	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Less Outstanding Advance		\$ -		
Less Program Income		\$ -	\$ -	
		CURRENT DUE \$ -		

Check all those that apply:

- Supporting documentation attached (required for Interim & Final Payment)
- Project Progress Report (Interim) or Project Completion Report (Final)

Please direct questions to: _____ Name _____ at _____ XXX-XXX-XXXX Ext. XXXX

CERTIFICATION: I certify that I have the full authority to execute this payment request on behalf of the Grantee. I declare under penalty of perjury, under the laws of the State of California, that this request and accompanying documents for the above referenced grant is true and correct to the best of my knowledge, and represents actual allowable disbursements made for the work performed in accordance with the conditions of the grant.

Signature of Authorized Official	Printed Name	Title	Date
CAL FIRE USE ONLY			
Payment approval signature (Unit/Field Staff)		Title	Date
Payment approval signature (Program Manager)		Title	Date
Payment approval signature (Grants Management Unit)		Title	Date
CAL FIRE Coding:	PO ID	Ref	ENY
			Program
	Account	Alt Account	Rep Struc
	5340580	5340580000	3540
	Fund	Project ID	Activity ID

APPENDIX J – CALCULATING INTEREST ON ADVANCE PAYMENTS

Interest on Advance Payments must be reported on invoices as Program Income no less frequently than quarterly, unless otherwise waived by CAL FIRE. Documentation to be provided with the invoice should include a copy of the statement showing the grantee's name, initial deposit of the advance funds into the account and the interest rate earned for each statement period associated with the invoice period reported until the advance funds have been fully liquidated. It is advised that the account number and other sensitive information be redacted from the bank statement.

Separate Account for Advance Payments: Advance funds deposited in a separate interest-bearing account that is not comingled with any other funds should provide a copy of the statement showing the interest earned for each statement period. The amount reflected as interest earned on each statement should tie to the Program Income reported on the invoice, unless there is additional program income earned.

Co-mingled Advance Payments: Advance funds that are co-mingled with other funds shall include a copy of the statement for each statement period associated with the advance funds. The calculation for the invoice period must be included and the total interest should tie to the Program Income reported on the invoice, unless there is additional program income earned. The interest earned can be calculated as:

Formula:

Remaining advance funds x interest rate % = Annual Interest.

Annual Interest/365 days = Daily Rate.

Daily Rate x number of days = Interest/Program Income

Use of an alternative calculation method based on the grantee's accounting process may be accepted at CAL FIRE's discretion.