

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
(CAL FIRE)

Wildfire Resilience and Forestry Assistance Grant
Guidelines
FY 2023-2024

January 29, 2024



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Introduction

This grant guideline includes information for the use of funds administered by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) for the purpose of developing grant funded projects that, in part, address the needs of the Governor's Forest Management Task Force's Wildfire and Forest Resilience Action Plan items 1.10, 1.11, 1.13 and 1.14 as well as other objectives of the California Forest Improvement Program and Act.

As per Public Resources Code 4799.05, the Director of CAL FIRE may provide grants to, or enter into contracts or other cooperative agreements with, entities, including, but not limited to, private or nongovernmental entities, Native American tribes, or local, state, and federal public agencies, for the implementation and administration of projects and programs to improve forest health and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

The California Forest Management Task Force (Task Force) was established in 2018 to introduce a more holistic, integrated approach toward effective forest management. The Task Force's purpose has been to develop a framework for establishing healthy and resilient forests that can withstand and adapt to wildfire, drought, and a changing climate.

This Action Plan responds to that challenge by integrating key findings, recommendations, and assessments into a single coordinated and comprehensive strategy.

Significantly increasing the pace and scale of forest management across the state can only be achieved through significant contributions from small private forestland owners.

To that end the following goals as set out in the Action Plan are the focus of projects under this grant solicitation. The relationship between the Wildfire Resilience Block Grants and the Action Plan Goals are summarized below each Goal.

- 1.10 Maintain Forest Stewardship Education Program: CAL FIRE will maintain its Forest Stewardship Workshop program to help forest landowners develop management plans and implement stewardship projects. Workshop locations will be based on CAL FIRE's fire-risk and priority landscape map and the 2019 Community Wildfire Prevention and Mitigation Report.
- 1.11 Increase Technical Assistance: The state, through contracts with cooperators, will assist landowners with Forest Management Plans, Burn Plans, archeological and biological surveys, project field design, and other support from forestry and other natural resource professionals.
 - Successful applicants should describe the process for how Technical Assistance to landowners will be accomplished and describe metrics for landowner assistance success.
- 1.13 Support Forest Health and Maintenance Treatments: CAL FIRE will provide funding for initial fuels treatments and follow-up maintenance with landowners. CAL FIRE will prioritize funding of NIPF projects that are included within locally coordinated forest

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management and post-fire restoration projects that benefit wider landscapes across multiple ownership types.

- Non-industrial private forestland owners are the primary target of the Wildfire Resilience Block Grants. Applicants should describe their process for targeting NIPF's while achieving the goals of "coordinated forest management", or forest management that blocks smaller projects in a similar geographic location to achieve greater overall forest health goals.
 - No landowner cost-share is required for application under this action item.
- 1.14 Establish Emergency Forest Restoration Teams: CAL FIRE and other state agencies will explore the potential for developing emergency forest restoration teams to assist small landowners impacted by wildfires with funding and expertise to restore their properties and help prevent further damage to life, property, and natural resources. This program can complement the NRCS Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and the Emergency Forest Restoration Program (EFRP).
 - Applicants should focus their efforts on re-establishing burned forestlands through site assessment, planting, site preparation and vegetation treatment on fires that occurred within the last 3 years.

These grant guidelines serve as a grant solicitation. Applications submitted must be in full compliance with all stated requirements to be considered for funding. Please read these guidelines carefully.

It is important to note that applications will be treated in accordance with the Public Records Act requirements and that certain information, subject to those requirements, may be publicly disclosed. Additionally, some project information reported by applicants will be made available on the CAL FIRE and/or California Natural Resources Agency website(s).

General Guidelines

The purpose of the grant solicitation is to meet Wildfire and Forest Resilience Task Force Action Plan goals through allowing a prospective grantee the ability to provide a program of financial and technical forestry assistance to nonindustrial forest landowners, where the grantee, as the supervising entity, receives the grant from CAL FIRE and provides outreach and/or technical/financial assistance to landowners in order to conduct forest restoration or management activities on their property. The grantee will be responsible for payments of financial assistance to landowners.

Projects should seek to:

1. Make funding available through agreements with landowners to pay for specific, non-commercial ecological forest improvement and wildfire resilience practices.

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2. Provide technical assistance to promote information sharing and education on the full range of effective forest management practices and opportunities as well as forest management education and management planning.

Eligible Organizations

Applicants submitting projects addressing action items 1.11, 1.13 and 1.14 are limited to Resource Conservation Districts (RCD's) and special districts capable of acting as lead agency for CEQA projects. These applicants must demonstrate they have the capacity to deliver a forestry based technical and financial assistance program to non-industrial forest landowners. Applicants submitting projects addressing action items 1.10 are limited counties, resource conservation districts, special districts, and 501(c)(3) non-profit organizations.

Application Period

Applications for the Wildfire Resilience Grants will be accepted between January 29, 2024, to February 26, 2024, 5:00 p.m. PST.

Funding Limits

Up to \$7 million may be awarded through this grant solicitation for projects addressing Action Items 1.11, 1.13 and 1.14. The minimum grant request should be no less than \$1 million. The maximum allowable is \$3 million.

Up to \$1 million may be awarded through this grant solicitation for projects addressing Action Item. 1.10. The minimum grant request should be no less than \$500,000.00 - five hundred thousand.

Project Timeline

Grant work must be completed no later than December 31, 2027.

Cost Share

Cost share is the portion of the project cost not funded by the awarding agency (CAL FIRE) and is provided by the applicant and/or other sources (e.g., nonprofit organizations, public agencies, and/or other entities). Cost share must support the proposed project and be spent during the term of the awarded grant. Cost share is not required as discussed on page 4, item 1.13, but is a scorable item.

Applicants must indicate if any cost share is being used as match for other grants or entities. Where applicable, cost share agreements or funding assurances must be submitted prior to grant execution.

Matching for State funds may be met with in-kind activities, funding or materials related to the projects. The grantee may develop criteria that determines the cost share rate for each individual project. Matching funds may not include funds from other CAL FIRE grants or awards.

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IMPORTANT NOTE: Cost share expenses must be reported to CAL FIRE on each invoice received. Back-up documentation for cost share must be kept by the grantee and must meet the same rigor as expenses claimed for reimbursement.

Timing and Availability of Funds

Funding of the projects awarded is subject to availability of funds and approval of the State Budget. Grant Agreements for grant awards may take several months to establish (following grant award) so please plan project timelines accordingly. The Project Performance Period will commence upon date of signature by CAL FIRE Deputy Director or designee through the grant termination date. Only costs incurred during the Project Performance Period will be eligible for reimbursement. Grantees have 30 days following completion of grant work to submit a final invoice. If selected, the project applicant shall comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws, rules, regulations, and ordinances in carrying out the grant project. Advances may be available at CAL FIRE's discretion.

Technical Assistance

There is no cap on the amount of technical assistance that can be requested. Technical assistance shall be limited to grant related landowner consultations, preparation of Forest Management Plans (FMPs) using one of CFIP's templates on their website or the Natural Resource Conservation Services EQIP program:

[California Forest Improvement | CAL FIRE](#)

[Environmental Quality Incentives Program | Natural Resources Conservation Service \(usda.gov\)](#)

When FMPs are developed, they need to contain a Geographic Information System (GIS) based mapping component. All FMPs developed with this grant will need to have a copy sent to CAL FIRE, along with the shape files associated with the lands they cover so CAL FIRE can track and report on them.

General Project Eligibility Criteria

The eligibility criteria for grants may vary and it is important that all applicants determine their eligibility prior to beginning the application process. Applicants may only submit one proposal for consideration.

To be eligible for funding under this program:

1. All projects must include a justification for the grant amount requested. If applicable, the methodology must include the cost of the grant minus any income from products or other revenues received from the grant implementation. It is incumbent upon the grantee to secure needed permits and CEQA clearance. This grant opportunity will NOT fund the development of commercial timber harvest plans. Grantees will be required to notify their regional Forestry Assistance Specialist prior to sale of forest products.

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2. Projects should prioritize funding forest improvement practices including but not limited to tree and brush thinning, tree release, pruning, site preparation and tree planting, follow up work to support tree growth, and/or slash disposal. This grant opportunity will not fund prescribed fire but will fund burning of piles for slash disposal.
 - Projects proposing reforestation shall provide assurances that seed and seedling availability is adequate to meet the project goals
3. All individual project applicants shall be responsible for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) using in-house staff or consulting services. All entities that apply should expect to be the lead agency for the compliance with CEQA, where required.
4. Projects may only be funded on individual nonindustrial landownerships encompassing 3 to 5000 acres of forest land. Forested lands shall be defined as having more than 10% tree canopy cover of any native tree species.
5. Any practices that are required as environmental mitigation to offset another project may not be financed by this grant program including mitigation work required by the California Forest Practice Rules.

Eligible and Ineligible Practices under Private Forestry Assistance Grants

The following includes but is not limited to eligible practices that project applicants shall provide to nonindustrial forest landowners under this funding:

Projects Addressing Action Item 1.10

- Eligible practices are limited to implementing a Forest Stewardship Education Program that includes workshops for forest landowners to develop management plans and implement stewardship projects.

Projects Addressing Action Item 1.11, 1.13 and 1.14

- **Forest Management Planning** - Forest Management Plans must be prepared by a Registered Professional Forester (RPF). The RPF may be either an in-house employee or a consultant. New Management Plans shall be written using either one of the approved CFIP templates or a plan acceptable to the NRCS EQIP program.
- **Technical Assistance** - Eligible practices are limited to providing in-person or on-site consultation with forestland owners to help them address their land management needs with the goals of developing a forest management plan for the landownership or providing updated information to landowners that are already in possession of a forest management plan. This may include providing detailed information about options available to them for management practices, other cost share programs, directing them to specific technical information about commercial and non-commercial forestry practices and permitting. Can include payments to Registered Professional Foresters to perform this consultation. Can also include costs of preparing CEQA, needed permits, database searches and archaeological compliance. May also include development of printed materials.

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- **RPF Supervision** - RPF supervision is the on-the-ground over-sight and direction an RPF provides the sub-contractor who is working on a forest improvement practice. RPF supervision may be the grantee's employee or a consulting RPF.
- **Site Preparation** - Site preparation is the removal of vegetation competing or potentially competing with planted trees. The distinction must be made that site preparation is used when trees are to be planted after clearing activities. Methods include using heavy machinery such as bulldozers, cutting and removing vegetation with chainsaws, scalping the soil with hand tools, and/or chemical treatments of the competing vegetation prior to planting. If trees are not going to be planted, this grant will not pay for site preparation with the intent to allow natural seeding.
- **Tree Planting** - This practice includes the purchase of tree seedlings or seeds, the costs of transporting and storage of seedlings, and the planting costs. Each proposed project description shall provide approximate spacing, method of planting, number of trees per acre, planting standards, seed zone(s), species, and timing.
- **Tree Protection** - This practice includes the cost and installation of tree protectors such as VEXAR® tubes, shade cards, or other animal damage barriers.
- **Timber Stand Improvement** - Precommercial thinning means reducing the number of stems of small commercial tree species to a predetermined spacing to improve growth and/or to reduce fuel loads. Mechanical release involves removal of non-commercial tree species, shrubs/brush or grasses that are competing with previously planted or existing commercial tree species.
- **Pruning** - Pruning is the cutting of lower branches of trees to reduce vertical continuity of fuels and improve wood quality of future crop trees. Pruning may be funded in conjunction with thinning or release. Rates increase based on the minimum number of trees pruned per acre. Pruning all branches within ten feet of the ground, combined with thinning and the removal of flammable shrubs and ladder fuels, is also recommended to reduce the likelihood that a ground fire burning through the stand would move up into the trees. Pruning provides other benefits as well, including increased exposure to sunlight to aid regeneration, improved aesthetics, and greater resistance to insect and disease problems.
- **Follow-up** - is work necessary to promote the survival of seedlings or for protection to or enhancement of other completed practices (e.g., fuel reduction). Follow-up must be undertaken within 36 months of completion of the original practice. Follow-up covers three types of project categories:
 - a. The first category pertains to any work performed within 36 months of a planting project to promote the survival of the seedlings. In most cases, insect, disease, rodent, weed, or brush control work will qualify for funding.
 - b. The second category is follow-up work undertaken as a continuation of a prior project. This category typically includes work, such as controlling re-growth from Thinning or Release practices that occur within five years of the original project.
 - c. The third category is slash disposal. This category can include mastication, chipping, or piling and burning of slash generated from Site Preparation, Thinning, Release, or Pruning practices.

The following practices will not be funded by this grant program:

- Minor road upgrading such as road rocking or installing rolling dips unless needed to protect an existing or replacement structure or where needed to prevent erosion to a watercourse. If there is no hydrologic connectivity, minor road upgrading will normally not be eligible.
- Construction of new roads or bridges.
- Fencing to protect stands from livestock.
- Planting of Christmas trees and greenery.
- Costs of land, water, irrigation, or purchase of tools or equipment.
- Projects designed solely for the production of fuelwood.

Application Process

Due February 26, 2024, at 5:00 PM Pacific Time
Electronic Application Submission in the CAL FIRE Grants Portal Solicitation link on the Wildfire Resilience [website](#).

The Forestry Assistance Grant Application criteria are listed in Appendix A. Scoring of applications will be based solely on the material presented by project proponents in their application. **In addition, items listed in Appendix C should be submitted at time of application.**

The Grants Portal will issue a Project Tracking Number for each application. Please use this file naming structure (Project Tracking Number plus document name) for attachments (if you have multiples of one file, please make it into a zip file) uploaded in the Grants Portal. Below is an example (the Grants Portal will assign the actual Project Tracking number that you will use):

- 24-WR-UUU-XXXXXXXX-STD 204.pdf
- 24-WR-UUU- XXXXXXXX-STD 19.doc
- 24-WR-UUU- XXXXXXXX-STD 21.xls
- 24-WR-UUU- XXXXXXXX-Letter of Support.pdf
- 24-WR-UUU- XXXXXXXX-Letter of Commitment.pdf

The Grant Review Process

Project applications will be reviewed and scored independently by several Forestry Assistance Program staff. These individuals may or may not be familiar with your organization, past work or geographic grant area. To avoid any sort of bias, grant reviewers are instructed that nothing can be considered for project application prioritization if it is not represented on the application or supporting documentation.

Project Application Review

CAL FIRE will review the applications for completeness and the ability to achieve the objectives of the program. Projects will be prioritized using a predetermined set of criteria that are consistent with these grant guidelines and the highest priority projects will be funded.

Upon receipt of a complete project application package, CAL FIRE shall review it for conformance with the specific funding requirements and this Grant Guideline. Please see applicable section in this document for scoring criteria.

If the project application is found incomplete in a material way or the proposed project is not eligible for a grant, the applicant will be informed that the project application is ineligible and has been disqualified.

Approximately within one month after the close of the application period, CAL FIRE will announce the successful applications.

Notification of grants selected for funding will be sent to the applicant. The grant agreement package for successful grant applicants will be emailed after selection and will include any required grant agreement forms and instructions. Please proceed to "Grants Awarded" below for more information.

Grants Awarded

Awarded grant applicants shall review and return original signed agreements, and any additional information required, following the instructions provided in the correspondence. Grant agreement packages not completed or received by the agreement deadline may not be eligible for funding.

Completed Grant Agreements

Once the grant agreement is received and signed by the Department designee, the approval process is complete. All agreements must be signed and submitted per deadlines established by CAL FIRE. A CAL FIRE designee will be named as the designated contact. No reimbursable work on proposed Wildfire Resilience Block Grants may commence until there is a fully executed agreement between CAL FIRE and the grantee.

CAL FIRE may perform an audit at any time during or upon completion of the project as described in this guide under "State Audit."

Grant Termination Date: All project and activity work related to the grant must be completed by the project completion date identified in the executed grant agreement.

Grant Administration

The CAL FIRE designee will conduct periodic and final inspections to ensure compliance with the project plan and environmental rules and regulations.

No ground disturbing work may commence until the requirements of CEQA or NEPA have been satisfied.

Grant Agreement Amendments

An agreement may be terminated by the State or grantee upon providing written notice to the other party, thirty (30) days in advance of expiration date.

Once a Grant Agreement has been signed, it may only be amended with advanced written consent of both 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 end date using the Grants Portal system. CAL FIRE reserves the right to waive the sixty (60) days in extenuating circumstances.

A grantee wishing to change the scope of work or budget of an approved project at any stage shall submit the proposed change in writing, on entity letterhead, to CAL FIRE for review. Any change must be consistent with the need cited in the original application and authorizing legislation. Any modification or alteration to the grant agreement on file must be submitted to the State for review and may require a new signed amended agreement.

Any reduction in the actual number of treated acres as compared to the goals and objectives of the grant, may result in a corresponding reduction of the grant award.

All correspondence relating to grant projects must have the grant agreement number featured prominently and be dated.

Loss of Funding

The following are examples of actions that may result in a grantee's loss of funding:

- Grantee withdraws from or fails to complete the funded project (in substantial conformance with the Agreement)
- Grantee fails to submit all required documentation within the time periods specified in the grant agreement
- Grantee fails to submit evidence of CEQA or NEPA compliance within 12 months of the execution of the agreement as specified by the grant agreement
- Grantee changes the project scope of work without the approval of the State
- Grantee or the State terminates the project by written notice 30 days in advance

Project Reporting

A Quarterly Progress Report must be submitted under the Pending tasks “Activities report request” in the Grants Portal. Grantee shall provide data reporting to CAL FIRE, including but not limited to, number of acres treated, number of parcels treated for fuel reduction for defensible space compliance, number of prevention plans created, and number of people reached in a public education project. CAL FIRE will provide grantees with the specific metrics and the reporting process. The quarterly progress report is due within 30 days of the end of every calendar quarter, even if no fiscal activity has occurred:

Quarter	Progress Report Covering	Due Date
1st Quarter	January 1 – March 31	April 30
2nd Quarter	April 1 – June 30	July 30
3rd Quarter	July 1 – September 30	October 30
4th Quarter	October 1 – December 31	January 30

Final financial reports for grant-related work must be submitted to CAL FIRE no later than 30 days after the project completion date.

Pre-project and post-project pictures must be submitted with the Final Report along with updated GIS data files.

Progress reports must also be submitted with every invoice.

Reporting shall follow the format provided by CAL FIRE. These records must be retained for at least 3 years after the completion of the project. Refer to “State Audit” section below. All projects will be required to track the metrics until project closeout.

Project Inspections

The Regional Forestry Assistance Specialist (FAS) assigned to a grant project will conduct necessary inspections for the individual forest improvement projects. Forestry Assistance Specialists may inspect a subset of completed project areas in order to determine that the project was completed as per the agreement. This inspection may occur at any time when an invoice is submitted from the grantee. It is important that the grantee contact the FAS with enough advance timing in order for the FAS to complete any needed inspection in a timely manner. Our intention is NOT to stall the reimbursement timing. CAL FIRE understands that this aspect will be critical to maintain financial security for the grantee and we will make every effort to prioritize these inspections. The intensity, or sample size, of inspections by the Department, will vary by project type, scope of work, and timeline of the project to be carried out. At a minimum, there will be an initial meeting after the grant is in place and prior to distributing funds.

Grant Payments

Payments will be made by CAL FIRE to the Grantee on a reimbursement basis. No work prior to, or after the grant period will be reimbursable. Grantees should have adequate cash flow to begin the project. If progress payments are desired, each invoice must be accompanied by a progress report. Grantees may submit invoices to no more frequently than monthly. CAL FIRE will reimburse all expenses upon receipt of an acceptable invoice. Reimbursement may require a site inspection from the grantee prior to payment processing, and this inspection will serve to monitor whether the project was successful and implemented pursuant to the project description. Paid vendor receipts, payroll documents, other back-up documentation of expenses, matching tracking, and a progress report or final report shall accompany all requests for payment. CAL FIRE will randomly sample individual landowners' projects to verify project completion. CAL FIRE will reimburse the Grantee for all approved eligible costs under the terms of the agreement.

Reimbursement payments are expected to be issued 45 calendar days from the time of an undisputed financial report. Payments are sent via U.S. Mail; electronic payment is not available. The financial report approval process is as follows:

- 1) Financial report submitted to the Wildfire Resilience Program (WRP) for review and approval using Grants Portal
- 2) WRP reviews the financial report and performs a project site inspection, if applicable, to verify that invoiced work has been satisfactorily completed according to the deliverable items described in the grant documentation
- 3) Grants Management Unit reviews and submits the financial report to the Business Service Office for payment

A final invoice must be received by CAL FIRE no later than 30 days after the grant period expires.

Advance Payments

Advance payments may be considered solely at CAL FIRE's discretion based on eligibility and may be subject to change. An [advance request form](#) must be submitted identifying how funds may be used over a six-month period.

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 H on calculations and supporting documentation for interest income.

Advance payment requests shall not exceed 25% of the total grant award.

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Advances must be fully utilized within a six-month period unless additional time has been requested and is approved by CAL FIRE.

Additional advances may not be requested until acceptable documentation is received that the previous advance has been fully liquidated on eligible expenses. In addition, an [accountability report](#) must be submitted to CAL FIRE every four months upon receipt of funds until funds have been fully liquidated.

CAL FIRE processes for approving and managing grant advances are subject to change.

Accounting Requirements

The Grantee shall maintain an accounting system that accurately reflects fiscal transactions, including matching funds, with the necessary controls and safeguards. This system shall provide an audit trail, including original source documents such as receipts, progress payments, invoices, timecards, etc. The system shall also provide accounting data so the total cost of each individual project can be readily determined. These records shall be retained for a period of not less than three years after final payment is made by the State. Avoid audit exceptions – keep accurate records.

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.

If a project is selected for audit, the grantee will be contacted at least 30 days in advance. 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 over the project life.

In an effort to expedite the audit, the recipient shall have the project records, source documents, and cancelled warrants readily available. The Grantee shall also provide an employee having knowledge of the project and the accounting procedure or system 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.

Projects may be suspended if the audit reveals discrepancies, or if CAL FIRE believes there are improprieties or issues with the project.

All project records must be retained by the Grantee for a period of not less than one year after the State audit or after final disposition of any disputed audit findings. Grantees are required to keep source documents for all expenditures related to each grant for at least three (3) years following project completion and one year following an audit.

Grant Suspension or Termination

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If the Grantee fails to perform in accordance with the provisions of the enacted agreement, CAL FIRE retains the right, at its sole discretion, to either interrupt or suspend the work for which the monies are supplied or to terminate the agreement entirely. Grantee may also request termination of their grant agreement with 30 days written notice.

Repayment of Grant Funds

In addition to the State's rights to terminate provided in the Grant Agreement, the State may terminate the grant at any time if it learns of or otherwise discovers that there are allegations supported by reasonable evidence that the grantee has violated any local, state or federal law or policy which affects performance of this, or any other grant agreement or contract entered into with the State. If a grant is terminated, the grantee may be required to fully or partially repay previously reimbursed grant funds.

Application Scoring Criteria

Project Scoring (90 points possible):

Span of Project Benefits: 30 Points

- **Projects under Action Items 1.11, 1.13 and 1.14**
 - Extent of total acreage where project activities will occur.
 - Number of landowners benefitting from landowner assistance.
- **Projects under Action Items 1.10**
 - Number of landowners benefitting from workshops

Project Quality: 30 points

- **Projects under Action Items 1.11, 1.13 and 1.14**
 - The degree to which the project effectively reaches the intended non-industrial private forest landowners.
 - The degree to which the project is planned and organized based on a community-driven process or is based on community identified needs such as an Emergency Forest Restoration Team.
 - The degree to which the project will have a technical assistance component that encourages long term management of forest resources on private lands and preparation of Forest Management Plans.
- **Projects under Action Items 1.10**
 - The degree to which the project effectively reaches the intended non-industrial private forest landowners.
 - The degree to which the project encourages long term management of forest resources on private lands and preparation of Forest Management Plans

Eligible Project Costs: 30 Points

- **Estimated Project Costs**
 - Overall project costs as compared to overall benefit.
- **Administrative costs**
 - Administrative costs directly related to the implementation of the project are eligible, but must be justified and should be included in the accounting for provision of technical assistance.

APPENDIX A – Forestry Assistance Grant Application

Online Application Process

Applicants must submit an application using the Grants Portal link, complete the application including all required documentation using the Grants Portal. Guidance for setting up a new Grants Portal account and general information can be found on the [Grants | CAL FIRE](#) webpage. No hard copy or emailed applications will be accepted. The eCivis online grant application process for the Wildfire Resilience Block Grants can be found at the following web location:

[Welcome to Wildfire Resilience \(ca.gov\)](#)

A complete application package includes:

Grants Portal

- Application
- Scope of Work
- Budget
- Goals
- File Uploads*

*File uploads to Grants Portal:

- PDF version of Project Map(s) (formatted to 8 ½" x 11")
- Articles of Incorporation, including document w/seal from Secretary of State (non- profit applicants)
- Project Budget Narrative / Justification
- Statement of Qualification (SOQ)
- Board Resolution granting authority to sign if non-profit or local government (an unsigned draft may be submitted with application, a signed resolution is required if awarded)
- State of California Non-Discrimination Compliance (Std. 19) – see Appendix B
- State of California Drug-Free Workplace Certification (Std. 21) – see Appendix B
- State of California Payee Data Record form (Std. 204) – see Appendix B
- Letter(s) of Commitment if matching funds or services are included.
- Letter(s) of Support (not required)
- Exhibit A and B of the University Model Agreement (only required for UCs, CSUs and their auxiliary entities that require the use of the University Model Agreement)
- Justification and supporting documentation for indirect rates exceeding 12%

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Zip multiple files of one type, i.e., multiple Letters of Support, and upload as a single zip file.

Online submission of Geopoint or polygons in the [Project Mapping Program](#)

Project Costs

Project costs must be consistent with the approved project and incurred during the performance period as specified in the grant agreement.

Budget Item	Eligible Cost	Required Documentation
Salaries and Wages	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.	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.
Benefits	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.	Same documentation as Salaries and Wages. Payroll summary documentation showing wages and hours paid to employee and associated fringe benefits. Back-up documentation to be retained by grantee for audit records.
Contractual	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), Wildfire Prevention contractor, etc. Procurement of contractual services should be documented to ensure selection on a competitive basis and documentation of price analysis.	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.
Travel	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 the IRS.	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.

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Budget Item	Eligible Cost	Required Documentation
Supplies	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. Supplies include items under \$5,000 per unit cost. (e.g., chainsaws etc.) All food costs must be pre-approved and explicitly listed in the Scope of Work, Budget, and Budget narrative in order to be considered an eligible cost.	Receipts identifying item purchased, cost, and date of purchase. Documentation related to price analysis of procurement of supplies exceeding \$500 must be kept by the grantee and made available for audit purposes upon request.
Equipment	Equipment is an item of \$5,000 or more per unit cost and has a tangible useful life of more than one year. Eligible Cost – Not permitted under this grant opportunity.	
Other	Other costs that do not fit in any of the above categories. The cost must be directly related to the grant project. A 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.	Invoices or receipts identifying the item and cost charged to the grant.
Indirect Costs	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 in 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 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 for all entities including UC's and CSUs should generally not exceed 12%, unless an exemption is approved by CAL FIRE.	Applied on a percentage (%) basis on direct costs except for equipment. 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.

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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 terms, cost, budget, or scope of work.
Applicant	The entity who has applied, requesting grant funds.
Application	The individual application form and its required supporting attachments for grants pursuant to the enabling legislation and/or program.
Appropriation	A Legislative budget authorization from a specific fund to a specific agency or program to make expenditures or incur obligations for a specific purpose and period.
Authorized Representative	The designated position identified in the 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 as stated in the PRC § 21000 et seq.; Title 14 California Code of Regulations (CCR) §15000 et seq. CEQA is a law establishing policies and procedures that require agencies to identify, disclose to decision makers and the public, and attempt to lessen significant impacts to environmental and historical resources that may occur because of the agency's proposed Project.
Consultant Services	Services which provide a recommended course of action or personal expertise, such as accounting or a Registered Professional Forester (RPF).
Contractor	An entity contracting with the grantee for services and generally receives a form 1099 for tax purposes.
Direct Costs	Expenses of doing business that are directly attributable to the Project. Examples of direct costs are salaries and benefits of employees directly associated with a Project or expenses of items used directly by the Project.
Employee	Individuals employed directly by the grantee and who generally receive a W-2 for tax purposes.
Encumbrance	A commitment of funds guaranteeing a source of payment for a specific Agreement.
Execution of an Agreement	The act of signing an Agreement, which provides a legal basis for required performance by parties to the Agreement.
Follow up	Forest resource improvement work necessary to promote the survival of seed or seedlings planted, or protection or enhancement of other work undertaken, as part of a prior forest resource improvement project.
Forestland	Land at least 10 percent occupied by trees of any size that are native to California, including native oaks, or formerly having had that tree cover and not currently zoned for uses incompatible with forest resource management.
Grantee	The entity that has an executed grant agreement for the award of grant funds.
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. Examples of Indirect Costs include salaries and benefits of employees not directly assigned to a Project; functions, such as personnel, business services, information technology, janitorial; and rent, utilities, supplies, etc. Indirect Costs may be referred to as overhead or administrative costs.
Management Plan	"Management Plan" means a long-term forest and land management plan submitted to the director pursuant to Section 4799.
Modification	An agreement modification is an informal agreement that moves dollars in the line item and task budgets not to exceed 10% of total grant amount; changes deliverable due dates or makes a minor change in the work in accordance with the intent of the legislation. It does not require a formal amendment of the grant agreement. See modifications section for further requirements.

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Non-profit Organization	Any California corporation organized under Sections 501(c)(3) of the Federal Internal Revenue Code. A letter of determination certifying non-profit status will be required prior to Project approval.
Payee Data Record (Std. 204)	Form Std. 204, "Payee Data Record" is required for all grant recipients. The form must be submitted to establish a vendor number for payment and to have funds encumbered.
Personnel Services	This budgeted amount includes salaries and benefits for wage-earning personnel employed by the grantee/contractor (not a subcontractor) and working on the Project.
Program Income	Income received by the grantee directly generated by the activities directly funded by the grant award or interest accrued from advances administered by CAL FIRE.
Project Performance Period	The period during which the Project Scope of Work costs may be incurred, and the work described in the Project Scope of Work must be completed, billed, and paid by the State. Only eligible costs incurred during the Project Performance Period will be paid.
Project Budget Detail	The term "Project Budget Detail" as used herein defines the proposed detailed budget plan identified in Appendix B.

APPENDIX B - Required Forms

Note: The following forms will be required if a project is chosen for funding.

Standard Forms:

- Payee Data Record form (STD. 204) – CAL FIRE utilizes this form internally for all grantees. This form is required for all applicants, including local governments, despite the language on the form. [Payee Data Record STD. 204](#)
 - Nondiscrimination Compliance Statement form (STD. 19) – Required at time of Grant application: [Nondiscrimination Compliance Statement STD. 19](#)
 - A Drug-Free Workplace Certification form (STD. 21) – Required at time of Grant Application: [Drug-Free Workplace Certification STD. 21](#)
 - Articles of Incorporation or IRS Letter of determination verifying 501(c)(3) non-profit status (Non-profit entities only)
-
- The following resolution shall be prepared by the grantee if chosen for funding:

APPENDIX C – SAMPLE RESOLUTION

A signed resolution, similar to 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.

PROJECT NAME RESOLUTION

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Resolution

Resolution No. _____

RESOLUTION OF THE _____ (Title of Governing Body/City Council/Board of Supervisor/Board of Directions) OF _____ (City/County/District/non-profit)

For Funding From Wildfire Resilience and Forestry Assistance Grant Program, (Title of Project), As funded through the Budget Acts of 2022 and 2023

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

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

WHEREAS, the applicant will enter into an agreement with the State of California to carry out a Forest Legacy Project. Now, Therefore, be is Resolved that the **(Title of Governing Body)**:

1. Approved the filing of an application for Forest Legacy grant program funds; and
2. Certifies that funds under the jurisdiction of the **(Name of Governing Body Here)** are available to begin the project.
3. Certifies that said applicant will expend grant funds prior to June 30, 2027.
4. Appoints **(title and/or 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, etc., which may be necessary for the completion of the aforementioned project.

Approved and adopted the _____(day)_____ day of _____(month)_____, 2024, I, the undersigned, hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution number _____ was duly adopted by the following roll call vote:
Board of Directors.

Ayes: _____ Noes _____ Absent _____ (Clerk Signature)

APPENDIX D - Grantee Reporting

A single modified reporting form will be developed for these grant projects. Instructions for the form will be distributed to grantees. The reporting dates shall be for the periods ending: September 30, December 31, March 30, and June 30. Information to be submitted include, but are not limited to:

Financial

- Grant funds expended for the reporting period, and to date for the grant.
- Matching funds expended for the reporting period and to date for the grant.
- Total funds expended for the reporting period and to date for the grant.

Activity Description

- Project location(s) - Project location(s) in the form of (1) a topographic map containing a north arrow, legend, map scale, project location county name and Assessor's Parcel number and (2) an ESRI shapefile (Zipped folder, will all files .shp, .shx, .prj, etc) polygon feature that depicts the outer footprint boundaries of the area on which treatment activities has been completed. The shapefile shall depict the actual project treatment area and shall be detailed/accurate enough that the GIS calculated acreage deviates from the invoiced acreage by no more than 5%.
- CEQA – All projects must provide the required CEQA documentation to CAL FIRE.
- Provide a detailed description of the practice(s) pertinent to your project. The description should include what progress has been made for the reporting period and to date for the grant. Eligible practices under this grant include:
 - Forest Management Planning
 - Technical Assistance
 - RPF Supervision
 - Site Preparation
 - Tree Planting - describe the number of trees planted, location planted, and species.
 - Tree Protection
 - Timber Stand Improvement
 - Pruning
 - Follow-up
- Acres treated and/or planted

Grant Products

- Representative project pre and post treatment photos and maps must accompany all invoices where ground activities have occurred.

**These records must be retained for at least 3 years after the completion of the project.
All projects will be required to track the above metrics until project closeout.**

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APPENDIX E –SAMPLE INVOICE/GUIDELINES

Grantee Name

Street Address
 Street Address2
 City, ST ZIP Code

INVOICE

Submit invoice and supporting documentation to:
 California Department of Forestry & Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)
 ATTN:
 ADDRESS
 CITY, STATE, ZIP CODE

DATE: MM/DD/YYYY
INVOICE #:

Grant Number: 8XX17XXX
 Grant Period: MM/DD/YYYY to MM/DD/YYYY
 Project Name:

Invoice Period: MM/DD/YYYY to MM/DD/YYYY
 Payment Type: Advance Request Interim Payment Final Payment

BUDGET ITEM	BUDGETED AMOUNT	CURRENT COST	EXPENDED TO DATE	CURRENT MATCH	MATCH TO DATE
Salaries and Wages					
Employee Benefits					
Contractual					
Travel					
Supplies					
Equipment					
Other					
Indirect Cost 10%					
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)

Direct questions to: Name
 XXX-XXX-XXXX Ext. XXXX
 Email address

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 Date Printed Name Title

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:	FY	Index	Object	PCA	Amount	Vendor #

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All Grantees must submit invoices in the format provided in this sample. Grantees must use the [invoice template](#) posted on the CAL FIRE Grants website. Due to differences in accounting systems used by the grantee, the grantee must include the following elements when submitting a payment request, either on the grantee's invoice or as an attachment to the invoice.

PLEASE NOTE – INDIRECT COSTS must be no more than the stated indirect percentage on the approved budget and applied on the direct costs for every invoice. For example, if the indirect costs were approved at 12%, no invoice may include more than 12% of the total amount for indirect costs.

1. Grantee Information – Includes the grantee name and address which shall match the Std. 204 - Payee Data Record submitted with the grant agreement. Payment will be submitted to this address after the financial report has been approved. Grantee shall notify CAL FIRE in writing regarding address changes and effective dates. An updated Std. 204 will be required.
2. Invoice Date and Number – Date invoice was issued and unique invoice number to be determined by the grantee for reference.
3. CAL FIRE Contact Name and Program.
4. Grant Identification – Grant Number, Project Performance Period, and Project Name as identified in the Grant Agreement.
5. Invoice reporting period – Performance start and end dates for which grantee is invoicing CAL FIRE. Under no circumstances will an invoice period outside of the Project Performance Period be accepted.
6. Payment Type – Indicate whether the invoice is to request an interim payment, or final payment.
7. Cost breakdown – Grantee costs must be broken down by the budget item consistent with the approved budget in the Grant Agreement. The grantee must identify the amount for which CAL FIRE is being billed in the invoice period and the total amount spent and match (if applicable) from the beginning of Project Performance Period through the invoice period.
8. Offset to current cost – Include program income earned from the grant if applicable.
9. The total amount for which grantee is requesting reimbursement from CAL FIRE.
10. Grantee contact name, phone number, and email address for questions related to the invoice.
11. All backup documentation to support the invoice (see Eligible Costs section below).

Certification and signature of authorized representative - Please see sample invoice for certification language.

APPENDIX F – Justification for indirect cost rate above 12%

Applicants that utilize a higher indirect rate on non-CAL FIRE grants and agreements ***may request to apply an indirect cost rate in excess of 12% as part of their application. The request shall include a detailed justification as a separate attachment to the grant application indicating why a higher rate is needed for the grant project along with supporting documentation as to how the higher indirect rate is determined. Supporting documentation may include, but is not limited to, the entity's Federally approved Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Proposal. Under no circumstances will CAL FIRE approve an indirect rate exceeding 20%. Submittal of the justification and supporting documentation does not guarantee approval of the higher rate which is solely at CAL FIRE's discretion.***

Applicants requesting the higher rate may include the higher rate within the total application request and within the budget breakdown. CAL FIRE will evaluate the request for a higher indirect rate concurrently with the grant application. If the project is approved, but the higher indirect rate is not, CAL FIRE will notify the Grantee of the reduced award amount and request changes to the budget, if needed.

APPENDIX G – CaIMAPPER

All California Climate Investments (CCI) funded projects will be recorded in CAL FIRE’s Management Activity Project Planning & Event Reporter (CaIMAPPER). To achieve this, grantees must provide spatial information about where the project occurs on the landscape, identify treatments for their project and identify what activities occurred under the category to their Region Grants team. Submission of all activities completed must be submitted with invoices on worksheets or other methods identified by the Grants Program. In addition, shapefiles (if applicable) where the work took place must be submitted to the Region Grants team as well for any invoice covering on-the-ground work are the only medium accepted.

Spatial data requirement

The grantee must work with CAL FIRE to provide spatial data that allows CAL FIRE to enter the project into CaIMAPPER. Spatial data is limited to shapefiles.

Grantees must supply this information allowing CAL FIRE to make accurate data entries into CaIMAPPER. This may be requested on a CaIMAPPER form or other methods.

APPENDIX H – 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.