



2021 Application Instructions - Fuels & Forest Health Projects

Forest Restoration and Wildfire Risk Mitigation Grant Program

Established by SB 17-050

Application Instructions:

The application is in pdf format. Applicants should use Adobe Acrobat or the free Adobe Reader software to download and edit the application for the most reliable results. All blocks are fill-in enabled and character locked. Applicants are encouraged to write clearly in complete sentences and to provide as much detail as needed for reviewers to understand all aspects of proposed projects in the allotted character space. Characters include letters, numbers, spaces and punctuation.

Note: Additional support materials beyond the allowable support letters, maps and contract bids will not be considered.

A. Application Information

In order to receive Forest Restoration and Wildfire Risk Mitigation Grant Program funds, the applicant or fiscal agent must be registered with the IRS and have a tax identification number. Fiscal agents often take responsibility for financial or other types of transactions for another entity. If the applicant organization will not be the direct fiscal agent for contracting purposes, please list the name of the desired fiscal agent. For the purposes of this grant application and the resulting grant agreement, a fiscal agent is a separate entity that agrees to assure that a project will use awarded grant funds to accomplish the ends described in the grant application and the resulting grant agreement.

Fiscal agents are eligible for grant awards on behalf of the applicant organization in any of the following circumstances:

1. The fiscal agent is identified at the time the grant application is submitted. The fiscal agent shall either be the grant applicant or is clearly identified as the fiscal agent for the applicant organization in the grant application.
2. When the fiscal agent is also eligible for a grant award.
3. The fiscal agent takes responsibility, not just for financial matters related to the grant, but for all aspects of grant performance and monitoring, including: financial accounting, performance of the grant accomplishments, performance reporting and financial reporting.

Note: The fiscal agent must remain unchanged during the full period of the grant.

Capacity building activities are awarded separately from fuels and forest health projects through this grant program. Is the Fuels & Forest Health Project application associated with a separate Capacity Building grant application? If the answer is yes, indicate whether the separate Capacity Building application is contingent upon funding of this Fuels & Forest Health Project by checking "yes." In other words, if the Fuels & Forest Health Project application were not funded, would the Capacity Building application still be viable if funded?

B. Eligibility

This section includes a checklist of **required** elements for each application. If the application does not include **all** of the items below (i.e. any items checked “No”), the application will be considered ineligible.

- Is the project area within the wildland-urban interface (WUI) of Colorado and is there a map showing the project location with the 2020 Forest Action Plan Subwatershed Priority Composite layer visible? Include a **required** 1-page map showing the project location from the Colorado Forest Action Plan utilizing the Subwatershed Priority Composite Map.

The Colorado Forest Atlas may be accessed at <https://coloradoforestatlas.org/>. From the Forest Atlas homepage, any users may launch the **Forest Action Plan 2020** application to view and print a map of the project boundary with the Subwatershed Priority Composite layer overlaid. For users with GIS data and capabilities, applicants may request a user login and launch the **Risk Reduction Planner** application, which allows users to upload project shapefiles, view with Reference layers active, and create maps.

The Subwatershed Priority Composite Map prioritizes areas that address combined themes of Forest Conditions, Living with Wildfire and Watershed Protection. The Forest Conditions Theme Priority Map evaluates threats such as insect and disease disturbance, canopy fire, and land use conversion. The Living with Wildfire Theme Priority Map evaluates wildfire risk including the wildland urban interface, drinking water assets, forest and riparian assets combined with burn probabilities. The Watershed Protection Theme Priority Map evaluates improving and maintaining quality of water and infrastructure by looking at infrastructure and predicted post-fire erosion rates. More information on the Colorado Forest Action Plan and Themes can be found on the Forest Atlas at <https://coloradoforestatlas.org/>.

Additional risk maps, such as a Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) map, may be included and should be clearly labeled.

Directions for users creating a map with the project boundary and the Subwatershed Priority Composite layer visible:

1. Launch the Forest Action Plan 2020 application
2. Navigate to the project area/area of interest by zooming in to a location or using the search icon and typing in an address or property name.
3. Expand the Reference Layers and turn on any relevant layers such as Ownership or County Boundaries.
4. Expand the Map Themes icon and make sure the “Composite Map” is turned on. Adjust the Theme Transparency in order to see any relevant Reference Layers.
5. Use the Measure tool on the upper right-hand ribbon and select to measure an “Area” or “Line.”
6. Click points to create project boundary points for the project area and double click on the final point of the boundary or line. You should now have a polygon or line around your project area.
7. Scroll down on the left hand side of the page to the “Print Map” function and click on “Print Map.” Click the check mark inside a circle on the map to indicate the area surrounded by the dashed rectangle is the area that should be printed and then click “Print.”
8. The application may run a few minutes while creating a map. A map with the SVI layer and project area boundary will be created.

If further assistance is needed, please use the CO Forest Atlas support page.

Users with a professional login may launch the Risk Reduction Planner application and upload shapefiles to create maps of project boundaries with the Subwatershed Priority Composite layer visible.

- Is there an additional required map showing the project location with the Areas of Fewer Economic Resources (Wildland Fire Social Vulnerability Index or WFSVI) visible? Include a **required** map of the project location from the Colorado Forest Atlas Wildfire Risk Viewer with the areas of Fewer Economic Resources (WFSVI) layer visible. Projects located in areas identified as having Fewer Economic Resources may match 25% in cash and/or in-kind match to 75% grant funds for the total project budget. All other projects areas must match 50% in cash and/or in-kind match to 50% grant funds for the total project budget.

Additional information on the WFSVI and how areas of fewer economic resources are defined can be found here on the Wildfire Risk Viewer application in the Forest Atlas at: <https://coloradoforestatlas.org/>. From the Forest Atlas, any applicants may launch the **Wildfire Risk Viewer** application and select the WFSVI layer to view and print a map with the WFSVI layer with a project boundary. For users with GIS data and capabilities, applicants may request a user login and launch the **Risk Reduction Planner** application, which allows users to upload project shapefiles, view with Reference layers active, and create maps.

Directions for users creating a map with the project boundary and the Social Vulnerability Index visible:

1. Launch the Wildfire Risk Viewer application
2. Navigate to the project area/area of interest by zooming in to a location or using the search icon and typing in an address or property name.
3. Expand the Reference Layers and make sure the Social Vulnerability Index is checked.
4. Adjust the Transparency and/or turn off Burn Probability theme in order to see the Social Vulnerability Index layer (project area within the cross hatching indicates a project is eligible for a 25% match).
5. Use the Measure tool on the upper right-hand ribbon and select to measure an “Area” or “Line.”
6. Click points to create project boundary points for the project area and double click on the final point of the boundary or line. You should now have a polygon or line around your project area.
7. Scroll down on the left hand side of the page to the “Print Map” function and click on “Print Map.” Click the check mark inside a circle on the map to indicate the area surrounded by the dashed rectangle is the area that should be printed and then click “Print.”
8. The application may run a few minutes while creating a map. A map with the SVI layer and project area boundary will be created.

If further assistance is needed, please use the CO Forest Atlas support page.

Users with a professional login may launch the Risk Reduction Planner application and upload shapefiles to create maps of project boundaries with the Social Vulnerability Index layer visible.

- Has the applicant made the required contact to either the Colorado Timber Industry Association (CTIA) or the Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS) Colorado Wood Utilization and Marketing (CoWood) Program Specialist?
CoWood: Tim Reader, Program Specialist of Utilization & Marketing, (970) 247-5250 or tim.reader@colostate.edu
CTIA: Molly Pitts, Colorado Timber Industry Association, (928) 521- 9476 or coloradopitts@gmail.com
Please enter the date of any correspondence with CoWood or CTIA.

- Has the applicant contacted forest products or wood utilization businesses or incorporated wood utilization as **required** and is there a plan for utilizing forest products/woody materials generated by the project?
All applicants are required to reach out to wood utilization businesses unless the applicant is utilizing all woody materials. When the applicant utilizes all materials, the value and products should be clearly articulated in Sections *F. Total Project Budget*, *G. Budget Narrative* and *K. Forest Product Utilization* of the application.
- Were county officials consulted for this project? Acceptable county officials may be county commissioners, representatives from the sheriff's office, county forester or forestry staff or county wildfire coordinators. Attach a **required** letter of support from a county official.
- Is there a formal commitment for matching funds? Matching funds confirmation can be communicated through letters of support.
- By checking this box, the applicant indicates that the contents of the application are accurate to the best of their knowledge and agrees to all contracting requirements including reporting and monitoring requirements described in the Request for Applications.

Minimum required application materials will include:

1. Completed pdf application with eligibility items checked 'yes'
2. Project location map displaying the boundary of the project on the Subwatershed Priority Composite Map of the 2020 Forest Action Plan
3. Project location map displaying the project boundary and the Areas of Fewer Economic Resources index (WFSVI)
4. Letter of support from a County official

C. Project Summary

This section is a summary of project details.

- Provide the approximate number of homes and critical infrastructure elements directly affected by this project.
- Provide the total number of acres to be treated. Through this grant program the CSFS will only pay for acres treated within project boundaries. Areas that are inoperable, inaccessible, or retained as untreated "reserves" will not be counted toward treated acres.
- Provide the estimated cost per acre for the proposed project. Cost per acre should be determined by dividing the total project budget from Section *F. Total Project Budget* (both the total grant share and match share combined) by the total number of acres proposed for treatment.
- Is the project identified through a community-based collaborative process such as a Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP), Critical Watershed Wildfire Protection Plan or similar? If yes, list the plan name(s).
- Will the project involve an accredited Colorado Youth Conservation or Veterans Corps organization? Type yes or no. Include a description of involvement in sections *D. Project Objectives* and *L. Partners and Supporters*.
- Will the project result in protection of water supplies? Type yes or no. Sections *D. Project Objectives*, *H. Project Area Description*, and *I. Prescription and Scientific Foundation* should address how the project will protect water supplies such as water quality, water quantity and/or associated infrastructure. Include the proximity to water source(s) and/or infrastructure, the significance of water supply/infrastructure and impact to communities.

D. Project Objectives:

This section is intended to provide the overall project description and key project objectives, with clear ties to priorities of the grant program.

Begin by clearly stating the project objective(s), followed by describing the specific role(s) of key players and anticipated outcomes as related to the grant purpose criteria and budget. Clearly describe how the project fits into the specific goals of the Colorado State Forest Action Plan* and specific Community Wildfire Protection Plan goals and objectives (if applicable). In the instance of the project being partially funded, is the project still viable with reduced outcomes (i.e., is the project scalable)? If so, clearly describe how the project can be scaled.

*** The 2020 Colorado State Forest Action Plan is required by the 2008 Farm Bill to help guide where the CSFS directs resources to and is available in the Forest Action Plan application on the Forest Atlas at: <https://coloradoforestatlas.org/>.**

E. Matching Contributions

This section is for matching share only. DO NOT show grant requested funds in this table.

Matching contributions must be either 50% of the total project cost (grant and match) or 25% of the total project cost (grant and match) if located in an area of fewer economic resources.

To learn more about areas defined as having fewer economic resources and the resulting Wildland Fire Social Vulnerability Index (WFSVI) please review report and data layer in the Wildfire Risk Viewer located on the Forest Atlas here: <https://coloradoforestatlas.org/>.

For projects located in areas outside of areas of fewer economic resources, applications are required to demonstrate an ability to match requested grant funds for a minimum of a 1:1, or dollar-for-dollar, grant to match ratio. For example, if the total project budget is \$100,000 the minimum match would be \$50,000 and the grant funding request would be for \$50,000.

Proposed projects located within areas of fewer economic resources are required to match the requested grant funds for a minimum of 3:1, or dollar-for-dollar, grant to match ratio. In a similar example, if the total project budget is \$100,000, the grant-funding request would be \$75,000 and the minimum match would be \$25,000.

All matching funds, but specifically in-kind match, must be clearly quantified and justified in Section *G. Budget Narrative* of the grant application. Applications will be disqualified if sufficient match is not identified.

Contributors: Please specify the name of each match contributor and the dollar amount of each contribution. Spell out all acronyms in Section *G. Budget Narrative*.

Cash match (dollars): Cash match is defined as direct funds made available to the project applicant (or their fiscal agent) for use in achieving work through the proposed project. Cash match could include cash on hand, commitments from lending institutions, or contributions from landowners with a signed letter indicating their commitment.

In-kind match: In-kind match includes donated supplies, equipment, staff time, volunteer time/sweat equity directly related to the project. Donated time will be accounted for using current volunteer labor rates of \$29.50/hour for 2021.

F. Total Project Budget

This section should reflect the entire budget for the proposed project. The grant share column should reflect the state grant funds being requested in this application and should not exceed one million dollars per project. The match columns should carry over information from Section *E. Matching Contributions*. Please ensure that total budget numbers are calculated correctly. All expenses should be described in detail in Section *G. Budget Narrative*.

Personnel/Labor: Include expenses directed toward staff time or labor, *except those being directed to contractual services*. Grant administration activities such as compiling paperwork for reimbursements and reports cannot be included as part of the grant share, but is considered a cash match. Sweat equity (such as homeowner or volunteer labor) cannot be included as part of the grant share or cash match, but is considered an in-kind match at the volunteer hourly rate of \$29.50 per individual.

Supplies/Materials: Include expenses for supplies or rental equipment used to complete project activities.

Contractual Services: Include expenses that will be contracted out to a third-party.

Indirect Costs: Include a wide variety of items not specifically broken out in the budget known as facilities and administrative costs such as costs for utilities, telephone, copying, accounts payable, payroll, purchasing agent's time and routine administrative services. Indirect costs paid by the grant may not exceed 10% of the grant total. Additional indirect costs (beyond 10%) may be used as match but must be documented with an established rate.

Anticipated Project Revenue: List anticipated cost offsets or revenues generated from the utilization of forest products or woody biomass. Any revenue generated by the project must be explained clearly in the budget narrative and be factored into the grant request. For example, if the cost for treatment is \$3,000 per acre but utilization will decrease the cost to \$2,500 per acre; show the \$500 per acre as revenue, request funding based on the \$2,500 per acre and explain the reasoning in *Section G. Budget Narrative*.

G. Budget Narrative

Describe in detail the budget line items listed in Sections *E. Matching Contributions* and *F. Total Project Budget*. Clearly explain how specific project costs were estimated. For example, estimated per-acre costs of contracted work should be supported by bids, known costs from previous or similar projects, or other means. Per-hour labor rates should also be explained. Describe the role of each entity involved in project implementation, the known terms of contracts associated with the project, and the nature of in-kind contributions. Clearly explain the anticipated project revenue or cost-savings, how revenue is factored into the grant request, the intended use of any revenue, and how revenue generated will further the objectives of the program. For example, will the revenue allow more acres to be treated? Describe your ability to leverage grant funds with other funding sources. If you have received project bids or contract estimates from the wood utilization industry, please include them in Section *L. Partners and Supporters*.

H. Project Area Description and Current Conditions:

Describe the project area and current conditions. The project area description should include: geographical or legal description, forest type, land ownership breakdown (including acres) and the community or communities in which the project will take place including population, number of homes and structures and other values at risk. If the project relates to a utility, describe the utility service area, population served, and infrastructure and/or water supplies protected. Participating landowners or organizations must be confirmed prior to applying.

Discuss the current forest conditions such as species composition, tree density, health, etc. Provide details when possible and explain how conditions were evaluated. Address how the project reduces hazardous fuels and/or improves forest condition and to what extent.

Attach a detailed and clear 1-page map that indicates specific planned treatment areas and displaying the Areas of Fewer Economic Resources index (WFSVI) from the Colorado Forest Atlas Wildfire Risk Viewer found at <http://coloradoforestatlas.org/>.

I. Project Prescription and Scientific Foundation:

Describe the project prescription and scientific foundation for the project; specifically the practice standards that will be applied to achieve the desired outcomes of the project. Descriptions should be detailed and measurable and may include; the distance fuels mitigation work will be conducted from homes and structures, target basal area for forest thinning, target fuel loading, target percentage for the reduction of continuous tree and shrub canopy cover, etc. Describe how invasive species will be managed during project implementation as well as how wildlife impacts will be considered. Prescriptions should specifically address how projects will comply with Colorado Forestry Best Management Practices (BMPs). The scientific foundation should be substantiated by a reliable and professional resource with proper interpretation and recognized as appropriate to the local conditions found on the project site. Resources include publications such as CSFS guidelines and/or research articles from relevant studies appropriate to Colorado (e.g., research on Front Range forests by the Colorado Forest Restoration Institute and/or the Front Range Fuels Treatment Partnership), management plans, and the expertise of CSFS foresters, consultants or other professionals. CSFS guidelines include Forestry BMPs, thinning standards, and guidelines on defensible space, fuels mastication, shaded fuelbreak development, etc., and can be found at <http://csfs.colostate.edu/csfspublications/>. Please be aware that successful applicants may be required to submit a more detailed prescription prior to a grant award from the CSFS.

J. Strategic Value of Project

Explain the strategic nature of the project. Identify if the proposed project will take place adjacent to or in close proximity to other planned or previously treated forest areas on state, municipal, private or federal lands. Explain whether the project will be implemented across land-ownership boundaries; if it is within a priority area identified in a completed Community Wildfire Protection Plan or FEMA Hazard Mitigation Plan; and/or if it is part of a larger landscape-scale treatment effort. Describe the benefits the project will have to the respective community or residents. If appropriate, explain how the proposed project could serve as a catalyst for future forest management projects.

K. Forest Product Utilization

Describe plans for utilizing forest products/woody material from planned project sites. Name the specific product(s). Visit the Colorado Wood Utilization and Marketing (CoWood) webpage at <http://csfs.colostate.edu/cowood/> and/or the Colorado Timber Industry Association (CTIA) at <http://coloradotimber.org> for further information on wood utilization. Contact CoWood representative Tim Reader at (970) 247-5250 or tim.reader@colostate.edu or CTIA representative Molly Pitts, at (928) 521- 9476 or coloradopitts@gmail.com for information on incorporating wood utilization into projects. List the names and dates of communications with any businesses that have been contacted regarding wood utilization. If any partnerships with industry are planned, please provide those details also. Attach current bids or contract estimates from industry.

L. Partners and Supporters

Describe coordination that will occur with participating groups/organizations. Specify conversations with county officials, including names, dates and locations, and describe how accredited Colorado Youth Conservation or Veterans

Corps, if any, will be included in the project. Letters of support from relevant organizations are encouraged to be included as attachments along with formal commitments from financial institutions, landowners and/or the wood utilization industry.

M. Timeline

Provide a timeline for the project including project beginning and end dates as well as project milestones with specific targets for completion. **All projects funded in this cycle must be completed by September 30, 2025.**

N. Maintenance Sustaining Project Longevity

Outline long-term plans to monitor and maintain the improved landscape conditions achieved through implementation of the proposed project. Monitoring and maintenance activities that do not use grant dollars are expected to occur after the project period to sustain the benefits of the treatments. Identify who will plan and provide the project monitoring and maintenance services, how the work will be funded, what monitoring and maintenance will be needed to sustain the long-term benefits and at what frequency monitoring and maintenance will be necessary.

Scoring Sheet

Attached at the end of these instructions.

FOREST RESTORATION AND WILDFIRE RISK MITIGATION GRANT PROGRAM

FUELS & FOREST HEALTH PROJECTS SCORING SHEET

Final Score: _____ / 65

1. Project Objectives
(Sections D)

Score: _____ /5 pts

Are the objectives of the project clearly defined and are outcomes related to the grant purpose criteria and budget? Does the project tie in to the Colorado Forest Action Plan? Does the project fit into the goals of a specific Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) or other similar collaborative plan?

2. Budget
(Sections E, F & G)

Score: _____ /10 pts

Review both the budget breakdown and the accompanying narrative. Are expenditures clear, and have utilization revenues been considered and explained? Do costs seem reasonable and/or justified for the proposed work? Does the budget provide effective leverage for other funds or in-kind contributions?

3. Project Area Description and Current Conditions
(Sections H)

Score: _____ /10 pts

How well is the project area defined (i.e., does it list participating landowners)? Consider any maps included: Subwatershed Priority Composite map and project map(s). Do the maps align, and what priority value are the projects located? Are the projects likely to be effective in reducing risk to identified values?

4. Prescription and Scientific Foundation
(Section I)

Score: _____ /15 pts

How appropriate are the standards and prescriptions to achieve the project and grant program's objectives within the current forest condition? Do the scientific standards reflect best available information? Are applicable Colorado Forestry Best Management Practices (BMPs) addressed or discussed? Have applicants consulted with experts? Have CSFS guidelines been integrated? Are the prescription standards detailed and measurable?

5. Strategic Value of Project
(Section J)

Score: _____ /5 pts

Does the project tier to a county plan, watershed assessment or relevant CWPP? Is it adjacent or in close proximity to other planned or previously treated areas? Are federal treatment areas applicable? Will the project achieve results at a meaningful scale?

6. Forest Product Utilization
(Section K)

Score: _____ /5 pts

Do utilization plans appear to maximize the possibilities? Has the applicant corresponded with any wood products businesses? Are details provided?

7. Partners and Supporters
(Section L)

Score: _____/5 pts

Does the project maximize the use of partners and supporters? Review letters of support including those from the county level (required), and consider any plans to partner with Youth Corps or Veterans Corps.

8. Timeline
(Section M)

Score: _____/5 pts

Is the timeline organized with clearly defined beginning and end dates, project milestones, and specific targets completed at specific times? Does the proposed timeline seem achievable?

9. Maintenance Sustaining Project Longevity
(Section N)

Score: _____/5 pts

Is there an appropriate plan to maintain the project after completion? Does the maintenance plan include details of who will accomplish maintenance tasks, how the work will be funded and how often activities will occur?