

**FY2012 NA State and Private Forestry (S&PF)
Competitive Allocation Request for Proposals
Frequently Asked Questions**

Q1: How is the FY2012 NA S&PF Competitive Allocation Request for Proposals different than the FY2011?

A: The objective of both Request for Proposals remains the same, the RFP is designed to focus Federal investments on priority issues, challenges, opportunities and threats of national, regional and State importance. This year's RFP combines three previously separate RFP processes, 'Redesign', Forest Fire Hazard Mitigation, and Forest Health Management and Treatments, into one RFP. Each category of funding has its own criteria.

Q2: Can the same proposal be submitted to more than one funding category?

A: No. Applicants need to decide the best fit for their proposal and apply for funding from one category. Proposals received in that category will be evaluated against other proposals received in that category.

Q3: Will core funding be part of the funding pool for the FY2012 NA S&PF Competitive Allocation RFP?

A: No. Core funds will be allocated using existing formulas.

Q4: What programs will be used to fund successful proposals from the FY2012 NA S&PF Competitive Allocation RFP?

The Northeastern Area will use net available (non-core) dollars to fund successful proposals. 'Redesign' grants will use urban and community forestry, forest stewardship, forest fire hazard mitigation and forest health funding for projects.

Forest Fire Hazard Mitigation uses funds targeted to reducing hazardous wildland fuels as well as education activities that reduce wildfire risk in communities.

Forest Health Management and Treatment uses funds targeted to projects related to Asian longhorned beetle, emerald ash borer, hemlock woolly adelgid, thousand cankers disease, and invasive plants.

In FY2012, the NA S&PF Competitive Allocation RFP will not be used to allocate Forest Legacy, Forest Health Protection Treatments on Federal and Tribal Lands, and the Wood Education and Resource Center (WERC) funds.

Q5: How will the FY2012 NA S&PF Competitive Allocation RFP be distributed?

A: The September 23, 2011, letter announcing the FY2012 NA S&PF Competitive Allocation RFP was sent from the Director's Office to the State Foresters, State Departments of Agriculture, and the NA Executive Team. The letter, along with supporting information, is posted on the NA Web site.

NA staffs are encouraged to distribute this RFP broadly. In FY2012, State Forestry agencies and the District of Columbia are eligible to submit or authorize proposals (pass-through direct to partners) for consideration under this competition. Nonprofit organizations, universities and other partners must submit proposals through the State Forester.

State Foresters will collaborate with State Agriculture agencies or other organizations with State Forest Health program responsibilities who can submit proposals through the State Forester or directly with a letter of concurrence from the State Forester.

Q6: Can universities or other forest health partners submit proposals through their State Plant Health Regulatory Official?

A: No. Universities and other forest health partners must submit proposals through their State Forester. State Plant Health Regulatory Officials can submit directly for their agency's work with a letter of concurrence from the State Forester.

Q7: Why are proposals submitted through the State Foresters?

A: There are several reasons that the State Foresters will be intricately involved in the FY2012 NA S&PF Competitive Allocation RFP. The State Foresters are required by law (as directed by the Farm Bill) and are given the responsibility for implementing their State Forest Strategy in cooperation with partners. NA is providing this competitive allocation process as an opportunity for the States to meet this requirement. Funneling all proposals through the State Foresters provides a secondary benefit of allowing them to be more informed of opportunities to cooperate with others in pursuit of their State's priorities.

Q8: Will the State Foresters forward all proposals they receive to NA or will they forward the proposals they concur with?

A: NA will encourage State Foresters to forward proposals they receive from other partners. However, State Foresters have the discretion to not forward proposals.

Q9: Will organizations receive feedback if their project is not selected for funding?

A: Unfortunately, some projects will not receive funding. NA employees and State Forestry agencies will be encouraged to work with partners to strengthen and improve project submissions for future solicitations.

Q10: If a cooperator is located in one State but doing work in another, which State Forester should they submit their proposal to?

A: The cooperator should submit the proposal through the State Forester where the work is to be done.

Q11: How does an organization submit a multistate or multiregion proposal?

A: The applicant needs the concurrence of all participating State Foresters. The proposal should clearly identify the amount of funding requested for each State. The proposal needs to be linked to each individual State's strategy.

Q12: Is this the only way NA is going to allocate funding to projects throughout the year?

A: There are no absolutes. The FY2012 NA S&PF Competitive Allocation RFP is an important and valuable tool for allocating funds to integrated and outcome-based projects. If additional funding becomes available after the initial selection and funding of projects, the NA Director, in cooperation with NAASF Executive Committee, will look at the ranked list of proposals for the next projects to fund. In some cases, other important or critical programmatic needs may arise during the year, and the NA Director may apply available funds to those needs as in the past.

Q13: Is there a cap on the number of proposals that any one State can submit?

A: There is no cap on the number of proposals a State can submit. However, proposals may be submitted under one and only one RFP category.

Q14: What are the minimum and maximum proposal amounts?

The minimum project proposal amount in Federal funding for the “Redesign Grants” is \$25,000; however, there is no minimum for forest fire hazard mitigation or forest health management and treatment proposals. The maximum amount of Federal funding that will be awarded to any one State via this competitive process is 15 percent of the total available funding for each RFP category.

Q15: Should States group similar projects into one proposal or should each project be submitted separately?

A: States can group projects if it makes sense to do so. For example, grouping projects may result in a more measurable outcome.

Q16: When the Review Team evaluates “bundled” proposals, will they recommend that projects within the bundle be divided, dropped, or switched?

A: The Review Team will consider “bundled” proposals in their entirety. The Review Team will not modify or adjust proposals after submission.

Q17: Will proposals that integrate more than one program or use more than one authority receive higher priority?

A: In FY2012, proposals that integrate more than one program or authority will not necessarily receive higher priority. Priority will be given to proposals that best help the States address their priority actions and issues; in some cases this requires an integrated approach to achieve a specific purpose or outcome. Proposals that integrate programs are best submitted under the “Redesign” category.

Q18: Can proposals be submitted to do work on Federal lands?

A: No. The FY2012 NA S&PF Competitive Allocation RFP is for work on non-Federal lands.

Q19: How can States that have difficulty meeting matching requirements compete for funds?

A: A 50/50 match is required for the FY2012 NA S&PF Competitive Allocation RFP. Matching requirements may be met in a variety of ways. States can partner with other organizations to meet matching requirements or they can request that funds be directly passed through to cooperating organizations to accomplish priorities in their State.

Q20: In order to compete for these federal funds, a 50/50 cost share is required. How can I determine what expenditures constitute a match?

A: The legislative authorities for the funding covered under the RFP require a one-to-one cost share. Recipients can provide their matching contributions in any of the following ways: cash, in-kind, program income or a combination of nonfederal sources. More detailed information on developing matching contributions is available at <http://na.fs.fed.us/rfp>. If you have questions regarding match, please contact Zaneta Hammond at 610-557-4105 or zhammond@fs.fed.us or Lori Gordon at 610-557-4106 or lgordon@fs.fed.us

Q21: Can I receive reimbursement for indirect costs?

- A.** Indirect costs are valid expenses however these elements of costs are always negotiable. The Forest Service does not have to reimburse indirect costs if it is not in the best interest of the Forest Service programs.

If you include indirect costs in your budget detail, they must be supported, in writing, by an indirect cost rate determination issued by your cognizant agency. If you do not currently have an approved rate from your cognizant agency, written documentation of past historical actual indirect cost rates can temporarily be accepted however you will have to apply for an approved rate within three month of date of the award.

If you have questions that cannot be answered using this document, please contact Keith Tackett at 610-557-4128 or ktackett@fs.fed.us. He will work with the NA Deputy Director to get your questions answered and use the information to update this list of Frequently Asked Questions.