

Request for Proposals (RFP) – 2019 Western Wildland Urban Interface Grant Program

July 3, 2018

The Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation is now accepting applications for the 2019 Western Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) Grant Program.

Offered by the office of the Montana State Forester in partnership with USDA Forest Service State and Private Forestry, the Western WUI Grant Program offers financial assistance to reduce risk from wildland fire to residents living in and around forested areas of 17 western states and island territories. Funds are awarded through a competitive process for projects addressing three key areas: 1) Reduce Hazardous Fuels / Restore Fire-Adapted Ecosystems in the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) 2) Improve Prevention/Education in the Interface 3) Planning.

Application Submission

Applicants must complete the attached DNRC Western WUI grant application, in accordance with the guidelines in the attached document “Criteria and Instructions to States” and additional special instructions included in this document. The application and instructions may also be viewed at <http://dnrc.mt.gov/divisions/forestry/forestry-assistance/forest-stewardship/western-wildland-urban-interface-grant-program>. The 2019 application has been altered from previous versions - **please be sure to use the 2019 application.**

Application due date: 5pm on August 10, 2018

Submit PDF applications electronically to nfpgnants@mt.gov

Application Instructions, Review and Selection Process

Applications will be scored and ranked by a statewide selection committee, based on criteria as defined by the Western States Fire Managers (see Criteria and Instructions to States document) and by a state-specific point system which allows for stratification of applications. **Please read the Criteria and Instructions to States completely and carefully. In addition, please pay close attention to the following special instructions from the state scoring committee:**

Special instructions:

1. **Stewardship plans required for all hazardous fuels reduction project beneficiaries.** Recipients of FY2019 Western WUI grants who are implementing hazardous fuels reduction projects must develop a basic forest stewardship plan for each property owner (beneficiary) receiving cost-share assistance through this program. **Proposals should include a statement of intent to develop plans in Box 11, Project Sustainability.** Plans must include the following basic criteria:
 - o Document authorship.
 - o Clearly state landowner objectives.
 - o Describe current and desired forest condition.
 - o Include practices and activities aimed at reaching the desired forest condition.
 - o Document a feasible strategy and timeline for practice and activity implementation.

- Describe long-term monitoring and maintenance activities to be completed by the landowner to ensure sustainability of the fuels reduction activities.
- Be developed for a specified management period that adequately allows for progress with the landowner's future stewardship objectives.

Plans are not intended to be extremely lengthy or technical and may be crafted through organization-specific templates. They are intended to replace treatment monitoring and maintenance agreements. Please contact the DNRC Stewardship Specialist if you require more clarification on plan components.

2. DO NOT alter the application form in any way. Alterations to the application form will result in immediate disqualification.
3. Total maximum federal award is \$300,000. DNRC will retain 10% for program management and administrative costs; therefore, the maximum grant request for this application is \$270,000.
4. The WUI grant program requires a match of 1:1 federal to non-federal funds, which DNRC will meet. DNRC requires an additional match of 4:1 federal to non-federal funds from project cooperators. For instance, a grant request of \$270,000 will require a match* of \$67,500 from the applicant, other project partners and/or landowner beneficiaries. Applicants must describe their source(s) of match in Box 9, Project Collaboration.
5. The national instructions ask applicants to address their proposal's relationship to state Forest Action Plans and CWPPs (Box 6). Montana's revised Forest Action Plan can be found here: <http://dnrc.mt.gov/divisions/forestry/forestry-assistance/state-assessment-of-forest-resources-and-forest-action-plan>. Applicants are strongly encouraged to familiarize themselves with this document and refer to it in throughout preparation of their grant proposal. Quality is better than quantity. A stronger application speaks clearly to a few goals, than vaguely to all goals.
6. Applicants who submit more than one project proposal must prioritize proposals in order of most important to least important. Prioritization of proposals will only be taken into consideration in the event of a tie between multiple proposals. Priority listings must be communicated to the state scoring committee via email at the time of application submission.

Scoring Timeline: The state scoring committee will determine which proposals move on to the western regional scoring process by August 24th, 2018. Applicants will be notified shortly thereafter whether their application will move on for further consideration at the regional level. The DNRC Stewardship Specialist will work with the applicant to make any necessary revisions for strong performance at the regional level. Regional scoring will take place in late September of 2018. Applicants will be notified of the outcome following approval from the Council of Western State Foresters in December of 2018. Funding will be awarded to successful applicants in the fall of 2019.

If you have questions or comments on the application process, scoring and ranking system, or Western WUI Grant Program in general, please contact the DNRC stewardship specialist.

* For hazardous fuel reduction proposals, match should only be met by the landowner/beneficiary as a non-federal contributor.

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