



MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND CONSERVATION
WOOD ENERGY PROGRAM

WOOD ENERGY PROJECT DEVELOPMENT GRANT

ANNOUNCEMENT AND REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

RELEASE DATE: SEPTEMBER 20, 2019

SUBMISSION DEADLINE:
OCTOBER 23RD, 2020

PROPOSALS MUST BE EMAILED TO:

Tom Perry

Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation

tomperry@mt.gov

INTENT OF WOOD ENERGY GRANT

The intent of the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) Wood Energy Project Development Grant is to support the installation of wood energy systems in Montana that use materials from forest management activities. The anticipated results of this grant are wood energy project development, increased utilization of Montana forest resources; a more diversified forest products and energy sector; enhanced economic development opportunities; reduced cost of forest management; improved forest conditions; and reduced air emissions from open slash-pile burning.

All purchases and activities funded under this grant must be completed by May 31st, 2020.

LEGAL AUTHORITY AND SOURCE OF FUNDING

The DNRC Forest Products and Biomass Program and related activities, including this Request for Proposals, are authorized by Montana Code Annotated, sections 2-15-112, 76-13-104, and 76-13-136.

This grant is offered as a subaward under a federal award made to DNRC by the United States Department of Agriculture – Forest Service under the authority of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2014, P.L. 113-76, as amended, and the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008, P.L. 110-234, as amended. The federal Financial Assistance Identification Number (FAIN) is 14-CA-11010000-021. The Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number (CFDA) is 10.674.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Eligible applicants are for-profit businesses registered to do business in the State of Montana, non-profits with current IRS standing, state, local and tribal governments, school districts, universities and colleges.

To be considered for these funds applicants must have previously completed a Wood Biomass Energy Preliminary Feasibility Assessment (PFA) through the DNRC's Wood Energy Program. And, conclusions from the PFA must have indicated the project is well suited for wood energy. Independent feasibility assessments whose scope of work can be demonstrated as equivalent or more in-depth than the PFA may be substituted for the PFA requirement. Determination of PFA equivalency will be made by the DNRC on a case by case basis.

ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

Activities eligible for funding awards include: wood energy project planning (including permitting, fuel sourcing), engineering and design. No equipment can be purchased with grant funds. All projects must take place in the state of Montana.

All expenditures under this grant must be completed by May 31st, 2020.

AWARD INFORMATION

DNRC anticipates awarding up to \$33,000 per project for three or more projects. Award amounts may vary due to funding availability and the number and quality of applications received.

EVALUATION CRITERIA AND SELECTION PROCEDURES

Application packages must contain a technical narrative, supporting documentation addressing the evaluation criteria described below, and a copy of the previously completed PFA. Applications will be scored and prioritized based on the applicant's ability to demonstrate their proposal's merit according to the evaluation criteria:

1. Project Detail

Describe the proposed project and its alignment with the activities eligible under this grant program. List specific goals and objectives in bullet format and explain how the project goals and objectives meet the stated intent of this RFP.

2. Costs

Estimate overall project costs and funding sources, including both DNRC grant funds requested and applicant match. Include any quotes from the selected service provider(s) for professional planning, engineering, design.

3. Implementation Plan/Timeline

Address each of the following items:

- Method/procedure to accomplish goals and objectives.
- Work plan and timeline. Purchases and activities under this grant must be completed prior to May 31st, 2019.

4. Technical and Economic Feasibility

As appropriate to the phase of the project that you are seeking funding for, list and briefly summarize relevant professional studies, prior work and research, and/or the current state of knowledge about the business or project idea that will provide sufficient information for reviewers to determine the applicant's due diligence and project viability. This may include, but is not limited to, feasibility studies, feed-stock supply-chain analysis, market analysis, environmental analysis, site analysis, economic feasibility, and/or business plan. Include relevant reports and/or supporting research as attachments to the proposal.

5. Project Impacts

Address each of the following items:

- Indicate how implementation of the project will affect the applicant, and the potential benefits to local forests and communities.
- Indicate estimated volume of wood or biomass material to be used annually, and the expected source of wood fuel.

6. Capacity and Experience of Project Team

- Provide brief background/history of the business or organization pursuing this funding.
- Identify key individuals, partners and/or consultants responsible for project implementation, their roles and qualifications.

7. Budget

Address each of the following items:

- Complete the Budget Table and Applicant Contributions Table (Attachment 2) and include in proposal. The budget should support the narrative statements and reflect anticipated expenditures.
- Indicate match amount from applicant. All DNRC grant funds received must be matched with non-federal dollars on a 1:1 basis.

8. Next Steps

- Describe the plan and resources for acquisition and installation of the wood energy system following completion of the proposed project.
- How will you move forward following completion of this project?

Proposal Review

Proposals will be reviewed and prioritized collaboratively by a panel which will include, but is not limited to, representatives from the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation and the United States Department of Agriculture. DNRC reserves the right to request further information from any applicant as needed. The panel members will independently evaluate responses. Panel members will jointly discuss their evaluations and a consensus will be reached as to which project(s) may receive funding.

The first panel review will take place on or about October 23rd, 2019. After the initial round of proposals are reviewed, if funding remains, additional proposals will be reviewed in the order received up until the final submission deadline of March 31, 2020. The panel may choose to immediately award funding to a proposal, may reject a proposal for funding or may choose to place a proposal in a pending approval status. Pending approval proposals may or may not be subsequently awarded funds and may be passed-over for funding in favor of a later submission that the panel deems to have more merit.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Please read **the entire packet** before preparing and submitting your proposal. Contact the DNRC program manager for clarifications and questions related to the program and your project needs. Be sure that you include all necessary information in the body of your proposal, not in cover letters or letters of support.

- ❑ Limit the grant application package to eight (8) single-sided pages, 12 pt font including:
 - Attachment 1: Application Summary Cover Page as first page
 - A narrative addressing each of the eight (8) evaluation criteria in a structured, organized way with the heading for each criteria category preceding the response for that particular criteria (i.e. 1. Project Goals and Objectives: ...)
 - Attachment 2: Budget Table and Applicant Contributions

- ❑ Additional addendums of pertinent information such as business plans, engineering designs, cost quotes, financials, and letters of support may be included in addition to the eight (8) page limit.

- ❑ **Grant applications must be submitted electronically via email.** Email full application as a single pdf document to tomperry@mt.gov with “Grant Application” at the beginning of the subject line. **The application submission deadline is March 31st, 2020.** Applications received after the submission deadline may be considered if funds remain following the initial round of applications and awards.

FUNDING GUIDELINES

Matching Cost-Share Requirement

This grant requires a 1:1 match of federal to non-federal funds. The funding provided by DNRC for this grant program is derived from federal funds. Additional federal funds may not be used for match. The non-federal match provided by the grantee may also include funds from other entities, partners and cooperators. Match **may include** in-kind contributions of time and effort, goods or services.

Grant

The DNRC reserves the right to offer a different grant amount than proposed by applicants. Funding amounts may vary due to the number and quality of applications received. The DNRC anticipates awarding a total of \$99,000 for funding of multiple projects, dependent on funding availability and qualified applicants. The DNRC will provide payments of awarded funds on a reimbursement basis.

All grants from this program shall be considered final awards to the project(s) selected. If project costs increase beyond what was projected at the time of application, the grantee is responsible for finding additional funding from sources outside this program. Grantees will be required to submit the final work product produced by this funding assistance as the final report to the DNRC.

FUNDING NOTIFICATION AND GRANT

Applicants will receive a notification of the status of the proposal immediately following completion of the review process or subsequent change in status. Following a notification of award funding, the DNRC will work with the awardee to complete the grant agreement process as soon as possible. Applicants must consult with the DNRC before incurring any grant-related expenses, as pre-award costs are not allowed without prior written approval from DNRC.

The grant agreement is a critical step in the award process and a signed grant agreement is a required provision. Prior to execution of a grant of federal funds, successful applicants must provide a current DUNS number. The State of Montana requires selected grantees to meet specific insurance requirements and provide documentation of insurance before agreement execution.

Grantees of federal funds are subject to the applicable federal grant administrative rules. See Attachment 3 “DNRC Subrecipient Information.”

In accordance with Montana Code Annotated section 49-3-207, the grantee agrees that the hiring of persons to perform work on the project will be made on the basis of merit and qualifications and there will be no discrimination based upon race, color, religion, creed, political ideas, sex, age, marital status, physical or mental disability, or national origin by the persons performing work on the project.

CONTACTS

For questions, contact: Tom Perry, (406) 542-4210, tomperry@mt.gov

ATTACHMENT 1

Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation

Wood Energy Grant

Application Summary Cover Page

Applicant Information

Name of Applicant: _____

Contact Person: _____

Phone: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Physical Address: _____

Email: _____

Federal Tax ID Number: _____

D-U-N-S Number: _____

.....
Project Information

Project Title: _____

Project Location: _____

Project Description (Brief 2-3 sentences describing scope of proposed project):

.....
Grant Amount Requested \$ _____

Non-Federal Match Amount \$ _____

ATTACHMENT 2

Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation

Wood Energy Grant

Budget Table and Applicant Contributions

a. Budget Table:

<i>Project Funding Categories</i>	DNRC	Applicant's Share (Match)	Total
Personnel salary/wages/benefits	\$	\$	\$
Travel	\$	\$	\$
Supplies/Materials	\$	\$	\$
Contractual	\$	\$	\$
Equipment*	Equipment Purchases are not Permitted		
Other Costs (specify)	\$	\$	\$
Total Funding Summary:	\$	\$	\$

* Equipment is defined as property having a useful life of more than one year and a per-unit acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more. If an item does not meet this standard, it is considered Supplies/Materials.

b. Applicant Contributions: (do not include amount being requested from DNRC)

Applicant/ Cooperator	Cash	Supplies/ Materials	Other	Total
TOTAL =				

Instructions for the Applicant Contributions Table: Identify the value of all applicant and partner contributions in the table above, add more rows if necessary.

ATTACHMENT 3:

DNRC SUBRECIPIENT INFORMATION

“Subrecipients” are entities that receive a subaward (i.e. grant) of federal grant funds through DNRC.

Grantees must complete the following steps before a grant agreement can be executed:

DUNS #	Review DUNS # data for accuracy or obtain a DUNS at http://www.dnb.com .
EIN #	Obtain an Employer Identification # (EIN) at http://www.irs.gov .
ZIP Code	Obtain the nine-digit ZIP code for your principal place of performance at https://www.usps.com/zip4/ .
Proof of Liability Insurance	Submit proof of liability insurance and endorsement documentation of additional insured status for the State of Montana, which entails the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ a copy of the certificate of liability insurance that (1) indicates types and maximum coverages, (2) names the State of Montana as an additional insured and as the certificate holder, and (3) lists the DNRC grant # on the face of the certificate;▪ a copy of the actual additional-insured endorsement page(s). The address to use on the certificate and endorsement is: State of Montana; DNRC Procurement; PO Box 201601; Helena, MT 59620-1601. Note: Members of MMIA, MACo, or MSPLIP have different documentation requirements. <i>Call (406) 542-4205 with questions or to request that DNRC work with an insurance agent.</i>
State Registration	Private entities (nonprofits and for-profits) must register with the MT Secretary of State at http://sos.mt.gov/Business/index.asp . Select the “Business Toolkit.”
Debarment & Suspension	Grantees must certify that they have not been debarred or suspended or are otherwise ineligible to receive federal funds. Searches can be conducted at https://www.sam.gov/ .
FFATA Reporting	Under the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA), some grantees must furnish data related to employee compensation to DNRC for federal reporting purposes. The requirement only applies to entities that received <u>\$25,000,000 or more</u> in federal financial assistance in the preceding fiscal year.

Regulations Governing Federal Grant and Grant Administration

Grantees must manage their grant funds in compliance with the “**Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards**” issued by the Federal Office of Management and Budget (OMB). Regulations are contained in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Title 2, Part 200, Subparts A through F (referred to as “2 CFR 200”) at <http://www.ecfr.gov/>.

Grant Manual

The DNRC Forestry Division Grant Manual is a tool to assist grantees with interpreting and complying with many of the federal requirements related to grant administration in 2 CFR 200. View the manual at <http://dnrc.mt.gov/divisions/forestry/business-management> (under “Quick Links”).

Internal Controls

Grantees *must* have effective internal controls and financial management systems in place prior to accepting funds — that is, processes or policies designed to (1) minimize the chances of fraud, waste, or abuse of grant funds and (2) reasonably assure that grant funds are being managed in compliance with applicable laws and rules. For more about this topic, see 2 CFR 200 Subpart D.