

Arizona State Forestry



Western Wildland Urban Interface State Fire Assistance Grant Program (SFA)

ARIZONA FY2015 REQUEST FOR GRANT APPLICATIONS

Application Deadline:

Applications must be received at:

Arizona State Forestry
2015 WUI Grant Program
1110 West Washington, Suite 100
Phoenix, Arizona 85007

No Later than: August 15, 2014 at 5:00 PM

Criteria and Instructions

2015 Wildland Urban Interface / SFA Grant Program

Overview: The Arizona State Forestry Division is accepting applications for the 2015 Western Wildland Urban Interface Grant Program. Projects proposed for private, state, and tribal lands within Arizona are eligible for this grant. The application, submittal form, and instructions may be downloaded from the "Grants" section of the AZ State Forestry Division website at: <https://azsf.az.gov/grants/hazard-fuels/sfa>

Funding for this program is made available to the State of Arizona by the US Forest Service through a competitive process conducted across the western United States. Funding levels for 2015 have not been determined, but are anticipated at up to approximately \$1.5 million for Arizona projects. The grant program has the following goals:

- 1) Reduce Hazardous Fuels and Restore Fire-adapted Ecosystems
- 2) Improve Prevention and Education in the Interface, and
- 3) Community Wildfire Protection Planning.

Award announcements are anticipated in spring or summer of 2015 and will be limited to a maximum of \$300,000 per project. Depending on available funding, some projects may be offered only partial funding. All projects will require a minimum of 1:1 non-federal match investment. (50% grant / 50% match) and should be fully achievable within 3 years from award date. Once awarded, grant funds are dispersed on a reimbursement basis - after the subgrantee incurs costs and reports accomplishments and expenses to Arizona State Forestry on a quarterly basis. Qualifying organizations may submit more than one project proposal; however the number of awards to each organization may be limited. Project applications will be accepted through **August 15, 2014**. It is anticipated that each approved project will be funded by Arizona State Forestry as a subaward of USDA Forest Service grant funds (CFDA # 10.664). Recipients will not be reimbursed for any costs incurred prior to execution of a final grant agreement with Arizona State Forestry. Do not begin project work prior to completion of a formal agreement and acknowledgment of all terms and conditions.

Minimum Grant Requirements:

The following criteria must be met for consideration of proposals:

- Application must be complete and received on time:
Project applications must be received by the date due.
- Applicant must be a qualifying organization:
Eligible organizations include Arizona fire departments and fire districts, governments (state, county, local, etc), universities, and non-profit (501-c3) organizations. Individuals and for-profit companies are not eligible.
- Proposals must address one or more of the three project categories:
 - 1) Reduce Hazardous Fuels and Restore Fire-adapted Ecosystems,
 - 2) Improve Prevention and Education in the Interface,
 - 3) Community Wildfire Protection Planning.
- Grant request may not exceed a maximum of \$300,000:
Grant funding will be made on a reimbursement basis after costs are incurred and will require quarterly progress reporting by grant recipients. Only eligible costs may be reimbursed. Specific administrative, program, and auditing requirements will apply to all grant subrecipients.
- Projects may be planned for a maximum of three years:
Projects are expected to start soon after awards are finalized, and projects that can be initiated quickly after award will be given a priority.
- Project must meet the 50/50 (1:1) match requirement (50% non-federal matching investment):
No more than 50% of the total project budget may be funded by the grant. At least 50% of the total project must be provided by the sub-recipient using non-federal funds or resources. The matching share can be actual dollars spent on the project or In-kind contributions (such as volunteer time or donated equipment and labor.) All project expenses and matching investment must be supported with sufficient documentation and must meet federal cost principles and administrative requirements.
- Project work done by individual landowners and family members:
Physical work done by individual landowners and family members on their own property will not be reimbursed, but may be documented as an in-kind portion of the required match.

Administrative and Accounting Requirements:

Successful applicants must comply with all regulations pertaining to Federal Grants. It will be the sub-grantee's responsibility to develop, document, administer and manage the correct accounting and administrative procedures for administering the grant in accordance with all applicable Federal and State laws, including the Federal Government Single Audit Act and all relevant Office of Management and Budget (OMB) circulars.

All project expenses and matching investments must be incurred, paid, and adequately documented before reimbursement of costs will be made. Project expenses will be supported by source documentation, such as canceled checks, paid bills, payroll records, time and attendance records, contracts, etc. Reimbursement of funds may take from 30-90 days once approved by Arizona State Forestry.

All records for awarded grants must be maintained for five (5) years following final payment or longer if required by law. OMB Circular A-133 provides audit requirements for all grantees. Recipients are subject to federal administrative requirements and cost principles in effect at time of grant award based on their organizational structure. The current requirements are outlined in the following table, though other requirements may be established before awards are made.

No costs will be reimbursed for expenses incurred before a formal award agreement has been finalized and signed by all parties.

Grantee Structure	Administrative Requirements	Cost Principles
Non-Profit Organization	2 CFR 215	2 CFR 230
Local and Tribal Governments	State and Federal laws, regulations	2 CFR 225
State Agencies	State and Federal laws, regulations	2 CFR 225
Universities	2 CFR 215	2 CFR 220
All CFR and OMB documents are available online at: CFR (Code of Federal Regulations) – www.gpoaccess.gov/cfr/ OMB (Office of Management and Budget) - www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants If grantees need assistance in obtaining any of these documents in electronic or printed form, please contact your Arizona State Forestry representative.		

Additional Grant Considerations:

Applications will be evaluated using the criteria identified in the attached *Criteria and Instructions* document. In addition, the Arizona State Forestry Division will give priority to proposed projects that:

- Identify specific projects in areas of Arizona that are at highest risk from wildland fire.
- Are cooperative in nature, involve multiple communities, or provide collaborative opportunities for individual communities and landowner groups.
- Have the greatest impact per grant by addressing the greatest need as measured by the number of landowners impacted and number of acres treated. Organizations considering projects that are smaller in scope are encouraged to collaborate with other communities or organizations to develop projects that have a greater impact. For assistance with collaboration opportunities, please contact the Arizona State Forestry Division District Forester in your area. (See contact list below).

Additional Notes:

- Information about **Arizona's Forest Action Plan** (Arizona Forest Resource Strategy), as referenced in the application instructions, may be found on the Arizona Forestry website: <https://azsf.az.gov/forestry-community-forestry>
- The **National Cohesive Strategy** as referenced in the application instruction focuses on three key areas: *Restore and Maintain Landscapes, Fire Adapted Communities, and Response to Fire*. See their website: <http://www.forestsandrangelands.gov/strategy>

- The program cannot approve purchase of any **capital equipment** with these grant funds. Do not include purchase of items costing \$5,000 or more per unit in the proposed budget.
- Proposed funding cannot be used for maintenance of fuels projects previously funded with federal dollars, and the response to question #11 (Sustainability) must describe how the project will remain effective over time without reliance on future federal or state grant funding.
- The regional grant application includes a budget line for **indirect costs**. Applicants must have an indirect cost plan established and approved prior to grant award by Arizona State Forestry for these costs to be considered.
- Depending on the number of Arizona applications, Arizona State Forestry may be limited to forwarding only the highest ranked proposals for regional consideration.

Application Submittal:

- Each project submission will include:
 1. A fully completed **2015 Arizona Project Submittal Form** (PDF document)
 2. A fully completed **2015 Western States Wildland Urban Interface Grant Application** form (PDF document - format may not be altered.)
 3. Additional **attachments** for state prioritization (optional)
- Project proposals must clearly address each of the grant application questions in the space provided. The attached *Criteria and Instructions* include specific guidance for each question.
- Proposals and all accompanying documentation must be received via email at the Arizona State Forestry Division by the **Deadline: August 15, 2014**
- **Email to:** grants@azsf.gov
- If the application cannot be transmitted electronically, it may be delivered in person or by mail and must be received at Arizona State Forestry by the due date.

Postal Address: **ATTENTION: Grants Manager**
2015 WUI Grant Program
1110 West Washington, Suite 100
Phoenix, AZ 85007

Direct questions to the Arizona State Forestry Division Grants Program Office or the District Forester in your area:

Arizona State Forestry – State Office
 1110 West Washington, Suite 100
 Phoenix, Arizona 85007
 (602) 771-1400

Arizona State Forestry - District Offices

Phoenix District
 2901 W Pinnacle Peak Rd
 Phoenix, AZ 85027
 623-445-0274

Flagstaff District
 3650 Lake Mary Rd
 Flagstaff, AZ 86001
 928-774-1425

Tucson District
 3237 E 45th Street
 Tucson, AZ 85713
 520-628-5480

Additional Documents:

- **Criteria and Instructions** (attached)
- **2015 Arizona Project Submittal Form**
- **2015 Western States WUI Application**

2015 Western Wildland Urban Interface Grant Program¹

Criteria and Instructions

In the West, National Fire Plan Funds to mitigate risk from wildland fire within the Wildland Urban Interface, are available and awarded through a competitive process with emphasis on hazard fuel reduction, information and education, assessment and planning, and monitoring through community and landowner action. Funding is delivered through and managed by state forestry organizations. This portion of the National Fire Plan was developed to assist interface communities manage the unique hazards they find around them. In addition to the National Fire Plan, the National Wildland Fire Management Strategy brings forward the goals of Restoring Resilient Landscapes, Fire Adapted Communities, and Response to Wildland Fires; the Western Forestry Leadership Coalition strategies of Conserve, Protect, and Enhance are incorporated into individual states Forest Action Plans.



Reducing wildfire risk in the west will be strongly influenced by the ability to collaborate across ownership boundaries and implement projects on a landscape scale.

Grant Criteria: General

- The Project must be for a qualifying activity - if it is not the application will be considered ineligible.
- Meets the 50/50 match requirement²- if not the application will be considered ineligible.
- Each grant request is limited to a maximum of \$300,000.
- No state will receive more than 15% of the funds available in the west.
- Not less than 70% of the funding available will be allocated to hazardous fuel reduction projects.
- The application must be submitted by the state forestry organization.
- The grant request must be submitted on a current 2015 WUI Competitive Grant Application template. Any alterations to the template by an applicant will nullify the application.

¹ Supported by National Fire Plan Funding through the State and Private Forestry Branch, USDA Forest Service. Administered through the Council of Western State Foresters, Wildfire Protection Committee (Western State Fire Managers)

² A 50/50 match. The allocated grant amount must be matched in full by the recipient using a **non-federal source**. Exception: Title III funds under the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000, PL 106-393 are not considered federal dollars and may be used as match. The matching share can be soft match (which includes training hours valued at an accepted rate, donated labor/equipment, etc) and/or hard match (which is actual dollars spent other than federal grant funds within the specified scope of work.) If the project is part of the consolidated payment grant, matching funds can be combined or met from any one or all program areas.

Grant Criteria: Qualifying Project Types

1) Reduce Hazardous Fuels / Restore Fire-adapted Ecosystems:

Fuel reduction projects and vegetation treatments have been identified as a means of mitigating wildfire hazards. Recipients shall facilitate and implement mitigating fuel treatments in or adjacent to identified fire prone communities to reduce the threat of wildfire to communities. These are projects that remove or modify fuels in and/or adjacent to WUI development. Effective fuels mitigation treatments can be implemented across jurisdictional boundaries, on adjoining private lands, or within the respective communities. Projects of this type include fuel breaks, thinning, pruning, landscape modifications, etc. The overall purpose is to modify or break up the fuels in such a way as to lessen catastrophic fire and its threat to public and firefighter safety and damage to property. Another way to prevent future large, catastrophic wildfires from threatening communities is by carrying out appropriate treatments (such as prescribed burning or thinning) to restore and rehabilitate forest and grassland health in and adjacent to the WUI. Such treatments have reduced the severity of wildfires, and may have additional desirable outcomes, such as providing sustainable environmental, social and economic benefits. Project proposals must consider all elements required to implement treatments on the ground, which includes acquiring the necessary permits and consultations needed to complete plans and assessments.

Examples of projects that qualify (not all inclusive):

- Defensible space around homes and structures
- Shaded fuel breaks
- Fuels reduction beyond defensible space
- Removal of slash including piling and burning; mulching; grinding; etc.
- Prescribed fire
- Thinning
- Maintenance of **non-federally funded** fuels projects (explain in application narrative)
- Monitoring components of projects for effectiveness

2) Improve Prevention/Education in the Interface:

Recipients can provide leadership to coordinate, develop, and distribute wildland urban interface education programs in association with insurance companies, communities, local government agencies, and other partners. Informational and educational projects must target mitigation of risk and prevention of loss. Projects should lead to the use or establishment of one or more fire program elements such as fire safety codes, implementation of Firewise safety practices, establishing local fire safe councils, and fuels treatments within fire prone communities.

Examples of projects that qualify (not all inclusive):

- Firewise or similar programs
- Living with Fire newspaper inserts
- Fire education components to Project Learning Tree
- Pamphlets, brochures, handouts

3) Planning:

Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPP's) are created by local communities and may address issues such as wildfire response, hazard mitigation, community preparedness, structure protection, or a combination of the above. The process of developing these plans can help a community clarify and refine its priorities for the protection of life, property, and critical

infrastructure in the wildland-urban interface. The Healthy Forest Restoration Act (HFRA) minimum requirements for a CWPP are: 1) Collaboration (must be developed with community members, local and state government representatives in collaboration with federal agencies and other interested stakeholders), 2) Prioritized Fuel Reduction (plan must identify and prioritize areas for hazardous fuel reduction treatments and recommend the types and methods of treatment), and 3) Treatment of Structural Ignitability (must recommend measures that homeowners and communities can take to reduce the ignitability of structures throughout the area addressed in the plan). A copy of the CWPP Handbook can be found at www.stateforesters.org/node/850. Planning projects or components of projects may also include Forest Action Plan updates or accomplishments of the Cohesive Wildfire Strategy Goals.

Examples of projects that qualify (not all inclusive):

- Creation of/or update to CWPP/or equivalent document. Note: If applying for funds to update an existing CWPP be sure to address the following in your application:
 - Accomplishments: Explain what projects identified in the original CWPP have been completed.
 - Collaboration: Identify new partners and stake holders along with updated contact information.
 - Prioritized Fuel Reduction: Identify and prioritize new hazardous fuels reduction projects, the method of treatments to be employed, and how these projects address any changes to community objectives and values at risk.
 - Treatment of Structural Ignitability: Explain new or additional measures to be implemented to reduce home owner and/or community ignitability of structures.
- Priority projects listed in existing CWPPs covering the above criteria

4) Examples of Projects that DO NOT Qualify (not all inclusive):

- **Maintenance on previous federally funded fuels projects**
- Preparedness and suppression capacity building; such as purchase of fire department equipment (try VFA, DHS and FEMA grant programs)
- Small business start-up funding
- Research and development projects (try Economic Action Program)
- GIS and database systems
- Construction/Infrastructure (building remodel, bridges, road construction, water development)

Grant Scoring: “Note changes have occurred from 2013”

- All grants will be scored based on the following (**the highest possible score is 45**):
- **Does the application clearly show how the budget will be spent by line item and are expenditures applicable and relevant to the goals and objectives of the project?**
Clearly defined and applicable = 5 Not defined/not applicable to project = 0
 - **Describe the Project- Does the application clearly describe the challenges and issues that articulate why the project is important?**
Clearly defined = 5 Not defined = 0
 - **Planning Linkages- Does the application clearly link or tie the project to an existing community plan, or is the project consistent with the state Forest Action Plan(s) (Enhancing, Protecting and or Conserving) or goals of the Cohesive Wildfire Strategy? The project must be linked to one of the planning elements. Does the project develop or refine an existing plan?**
Clearly defined = 5 Not defined = 0
 - **Project activities- Does the application clearly define what the project is and what the project proposes to do? Does the application clearly define how the project will be accomplished, including identifying measurable outcomes? (are the proposed activities clear and achievable, goals defined, outcomes measurable, # of acres treated, # of education/outreach programs, planning efforts clearly described etc.)**
Clearly defined = 10 Not defined = 0
 - **Landscape Attributes- Does the application clearly define the scale of the project including relationships with past, present, or future projects that, when combined, offer more benefits than when taken individually? Is landscape that the project influences clearly described?**
Clearly defined = 5 Not defined = 0
 - **Collaboration- Does the application clearly define collaborative elements including support from partners, agencies, landowners, communities? Are contributions of collaborators well described?**
Clearly defined = 5 Not defined = 0
 - **Project Timeline- Does the application clearly described the timeline to implement the project? Does the timeline include milestones, seasonal influences, ways to measure progress?**
Clearly defined = 5 Not defined = 0
 - **Project Sustainability- Does the application clearly define how or if the project will sustain itself after the grant period is over? Does the application describe plans or steps that will continue the project befits beyond the life of the grant?**
Clearly defined = 5 Not defined = 0
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Application Instructions:

The application is in adobe pdf format. It is fill in enabled in any form of Adobe Reader 5.0 or higher. If you do not have Adobe Reader, go to <http://get.adobe.com/reader/> and download the latest version.

- 1) All blocks are fill-in enabled and character locked. Applicants must fit all information into the allotted box space. Hold your mouse arrow over each block for further instructions. **Applications that have been modified for any reason will be considered ineligible by the review committee. Any attachments or additional documents will be removed at the state level will not be considered by the review committee.**
- 2) **Applications must be submitted through the appropriate state agency (typically the State Forester).**
- 3) Application guidelines by box number: (All boxes must be filled in on the application. If a box does not apply to your project fill in that space with NA.)
 - **Box 1 & 2-** Applicant and project information.
 - **Box 3 -** The totals in these boxes will add automatically when all data is entered into the fields. It is recommended you check that all numbers add up correctly. If the total didn't add correctly go back and tab through each box and see if that fixes the addition. Match includes training hours valued at an accepted rate, donated labor/equipment, etc., and hard match is actual dollars spent other than federal grant funds within the specified scope of work.
 - **Box 4-** The budget narrative must give specific details for each grant expenditure item (not matching funds) in box 4 (i.e. personnel/labor, fringe benefits, travel, equipment, supplies, contractual, other, and indirect costs). Explain exactly how grant dollars will be spent and how these expenditures tie directly to the project goals and objectives.
 - **Box 5-** The description of project area and challenges- applicants must give an overview of the project area and point out the hazards and clearly show the need for work in this area. If applying for a fuels reduction project, describe the vegetation types. It is important to define the problems and challenges so when you get to box 7 you are clearly stating how the funding will be used to address the challenges in this box.
 - **Box 6-** Relationship to Forest Action Plans and CWPP's. This was a new box for 2014 and must clearly describe how the project fits into the broad goals of a forest action plan (Enhancing, Protecting and or Conserving) or CWPP goals and objectives. It is important to describe how the project meets the goals of one or both of these planning documents. Relationships to the three goals within the Cohesive Wildfire Strategy could also be included in this section.
 - **Box 7-** The Proposed Activities in this section must clearly explain exactly how the grant dollars will be spent on this project and outline what will be accomplished. Unlike the overview, this will provide the specific details of the project using measurable units where applicable.
 - **Box 8-** Describe the landscape this project influences. Show how the project has or will have impact outside the immediate project area. For example, a project in a community

may compliment a Forest Service project on their land where they are creating a fuel break around your community defensible space project. Give specifics on how this project will tie into the larger picture of community protection or education. For information/education and/or planning projects explain how your project compliments or enhances those by other agencies or groups and/or ties into a greater goal. Explain the: who, what, when, where, why, and how of the Projects anticipated impacts.

- **Box 9-** Describe the contributions each partner will make to the project by stating the collaborating partners name and what they will be contributing to the project such as manpower, equipment, matching funds, etc. This should include the partners listed in Box 3 (matching share) but may also include federal and other partners that are contributing but are not eligible to use as match
- **Box 10-** The Project Timeline must include such things as: begin/end dates, milestones, quarterly accomplishments, etc – and be as detailed as possible.
- **Box 11-** Sustainability must clearly describe the who, what, when, where and why of how this project will remain effective and be sustained over time. The four main points to be included for fuels projects are:
 - 1) Environmental Factors: describe the maintenance requirements unique to this project based on site characteristics i.e., present and future vegetation occupying the site, growth rates, natural fire return intervals or any other environmental factor that affects the continued maintenance of this project.
 - 2) Education: describe how key players have been trained and educated to maintain the project and explain their understanding of the needs and expectations of the project's maintenance. If this is an information/education project make sure to explain how it will be delivered, the audience you are targeting, and specific deliverables.
 - 3) Commitment: describe the commitment by the individual/community to maintain this project into the future, i.e. state laws, CWPP terms, signed landowner agreements or other documents or agreements that hold the sub-grantee accountable for project maintenance over time. If this is an information/education project, make sure you explain the commitment to carry this program forward and update as necessary.
 - 4) Monitoring: describe who will be responsible for monitoring the project, what qualifications they have if they are not obvious (i.e. State Forestry personnel, Fire Safe Council member, Fire Department personnel, etc.), and at what intervals they will be checking (i.e. yearly, quarterly, etc); clearly describe timelines, and milestones.