

# REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

## **Reducing the threat of uncharacteristically severe wildfire to safeguard western water supply**

*Building local capacity to empower now-unengaged private forest landowners across Colorado, Utah, and New Mexico*

April 2017



American Forest Foundation

## **Summary**

The American Forest Foundation (AFF) invites submission of proposals for a renewable 2-year Network Partner Program grant to implement outreach and engagement projects targeting non-industrial private forest landowners in defined sub-watersheds in Colorado, Utah, or New Mexico. These projects will prioritize outreach to now-unengaged landowner populations at a scale commensurate with the conservation challenge, adopt social marketing best practices, and reflect strategies that provide interested landowners with a range of services over time, including but not limited to technical and/or financial assistance, that empower those landowners to restore fire resiliency to their property and in so doing demonstrably safeguard water quality.

RFP Issue Date:	April 7, 2017
Applicant webinar <sup>1</sup> :	April 19, 2017
RFP Questions By:	May 5, 2017
Proposal Due Date:	May 19, 2017
Project Award Date:	June 9, 2017
Award Amount:	up to \$75,000 each year for two years

This RFP provides information on: the project purpose, issue overview, proposal elements including narrative and budget, grant reporting requirements, and instructions for submitting your proposal by the May 19, 2017 deadline. Questions regarding this RFP and final proposals should be submitted *electronically* no later than May 5, 2017 to:

Tom Fry  
Western Conservation Director  
American Forest Foundation  
[tfry@forestfoundation.org](mailto:tfry@forestfoundation.org)

## **Scope of Work**

### **Purpose**

The Network Partner Program has three interdependent purposes.

- build local capacity to adopt and modify as necessary AFF's innovative approach to landowner engagement, in order to...
- ...empower landowners to take management actions to restore fire resiliency to forest types prone to uncharacteristically severe wildfire, and...
- ...track and monitor that engagement and those actions over time.

In so doing, we seek to preferentially target those landowners who are otherwise now not engaged in managing their land and do so at a scale sufficient to provide water quality benefit should those landowners take action.

### **Overview**

In the Fall of 2015, the American Forest Foundation released a report entitled "Western Water Threatened by Wildfire: It's Not Just a Public Lands Issue." That report concluded, in part, that across 11 western states more than one-third of high wildfire risk falls on private and family-owned land, not public land; and further, that more than 40% of the lands that support Western clean water supply that are at high risk of catastrophic fire are private and family-owned.

Subsequent spatial analysis conducted by AFF suggests that there are approximately 4.4 million acres across these 11 states that are: 1) non-industrial and privately held, 2) in forest cover types that are susceptible to uncharacteristically large and severe wildfire, and 3) are in important water supply watersheds. 72% of this risk profile occurs in just 2% of sub watersheds across these states.

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<sup>1</sup> AFF Program Staff will host a 60 minute video conference call to overview grant objectives and answer questions. Interested parties should contact Michelle Schmidt, [mschmidt@forestfoundation.org](mailto:mschmidt@forestfoundation.org), for details.

These at risk acres are owned by thousands upon thousands of family forest landowners. And yet, academic studies and anecdotal evidence suggest that over 80% of these landowners have not met with a resource professional. Cohesive, cross jurisdictional fire risk reduction and forest restoration activities will fail to safeguard threatened water supply in these at risk sub watersheds if these landowners are not empowered to make a difference on their land through, in part, the technical and/or financial assistance available to them from those professionals.

While many of these landowners would take advantage of technical and/or financial assistance if offered, most aren't ready to commit to action. For this population, strategies must be developed to sustain landowner interest over time, working with them at their pace and to their interests building to a readiness to act.

Efforts such as these can be time and resource intensive. Through this RFP, we seek to help build local capacity to reach and empower this population.

### **Statement of Work**

Over time the Network Partner Program (NPP) will provide financial and technical support to a range of entities (e.g.: NGOs, institutions, state agencies) in targeted watersheds across the western U.S. to develop and implement a series of discrete outreach campaigns that incorporate marketing best practices that empower landowners to implement forest restoration activities. These campaigns are locally branded, often supported with dedicated websites, and are designed to inspire landowner action which, taken cumulatively, increase forest resilience to the inevitable fire and therefore confer a water quality benefit. Successful NPP projects, comprised of a series of campaigns over time: 1) build a "pipeline" of landowners ready to take advantage of technical and/or financial assistance as it is available, 2) pursue strategies that overcome local capacity limitations and in so doing are aggressive in their scope of outreach, and 3) incorporate goals, objectives, and rigorous metrics including landowners marketed to, landowners responding, landowners taking action, and acres restored. Network Partners will use an AFF-owned spatially-explicit, relational database to track and report on outreach to landowners and ensuing engagement and action of those landowners. Because this work is predicated on outreach to targeted landowner populations to deliver a specific conservation impact (water quality benefit through fire risk reduction/forest restoration), applicants should review the attached map (EXHIBIT A) and list of target sub watersheds (EXHIBIT B).

Therefore, a successful proposal will include a discussion of the following. Maps, tables, or other summary graphics are encouraged.

#### Lay of the Land

- What is the targeted sub watershed(s) that is the focus of the project? What is the nature of the restoration imperative, including quantifying the estimated acres at risk and the relative importance of the water flowing from those acres?
- What is the ownership pattern across this focal area? What is the estimated population of non-industrial private landowners that would need to take action to lead to conservation impact?
- Are there any socio-political dynamics in the area that would be considered either a liability or asset?

#### Goals, objectives, strategies, and metrics (applicants should refer to attached goal guidance- EXHIBIT C)

- What is the long term forest restoration goal for this area? E.g.: Acres restored.
- Is the goal cross-jurisdictional? How will private land action complement work on adjacent ownerships?
- In order to reach that long term goal, what nearer term (1 year, 3 year, 5 year) benchmarks or milestones must be reached?
- What key objectives must be reached to achieve those benchmarks/milestones? E.g.: landowners marketed to, forest management plans written, cost-share resources secured, additional fundraising
- What strategies and corresponding timeline will be employed to reach those objectives? E.g.: successive outreach campaigns, services provided to landowners in lieu of technical/financial assistance, re-engagement with non-responding landowners
- What metrics will be established to benchmark progress towards objectives? E.g.: % response rate to outreach, number of landowners now working with a professional forester

### Partner capacity

- Who is the project lead (organization)?
- Are there core partners that are essential to success (that may or may not receive funding)? What role will partners play?
  - NOTE: Single entities or formal partner collaboratives are welcome to apply
- What capacity will be required to be successful, both in terms of FTEs as well as skills/attributes?
- How will this grant funding contribute to enhancing that capacity?

### Leveraging resources/ Fundraising

- What is the total cost of this project and how is AFF funding instrumental to success?
- What additional resources are being brought to bear and how does this proposal leverage those resources/funding?
- How will funding be secured to continue this work over time?

## **Budget**

Project proponents must follow the attached guidance and use the provided template (EXHIBIT D) accounting for BOTH requested funding AND match. All proposals must demonstrate no less than a 1:1 match. Match may include in-kind or cash resources.

Budgets may propose funding for a variety of purposes, including compensation, contracts for services, professional development, materials, and research.

## **Submitted Proposals**

Applicants are strongly encouraged to contact AFF to discuss proposals prior to submitting. Following submission, applicants may be asked for a brief follow-up interview.

Proposals should not exceed twelve single-spaced pages total (12 point font), submitted as a single PDF document, and should include the following elements. Appendices do not count toward the page limit.

1. Proposal title and contact information for POC (Cover page);
2. Narrative including discussion of the lay of the land, overview of goals/objectives/strategies, partner capacity, and resources leveraged, intent to support the project over time (Main Body);
3. Brief biography of project proponent(s) and core partners as applicable (as Appendix A);
4. Budget: anticipated costs using template and narrative (as Appendix B); and
5. Signed and dated letter(s) of recommendation are welcome but not required (Appendix C).

## **Reporting Requirements and Terms and Conditions**

By accepting funding, the successful applicant will agree to:

- Complete a federal subgrant agreement with AFF
- Provide financial documentation as applicable, including but not limited to: I-990, EIN/FEIN, DUNS number, A-133 or single audit, NICRA
- Pass Excluded Parties List System check
- Agree to participate in a capacity assessment survey
- Periodically meet with AFF staff or their designees to assess progress towards goals and organizational capacity limitations
- Consider suggested skill-building opportunities and/or participate in AFF-sponsored activities to that end
- Provide quarterly written reports, including financial statements.

# EXHIBIT A- Priority HUC12 Sub Watersheds

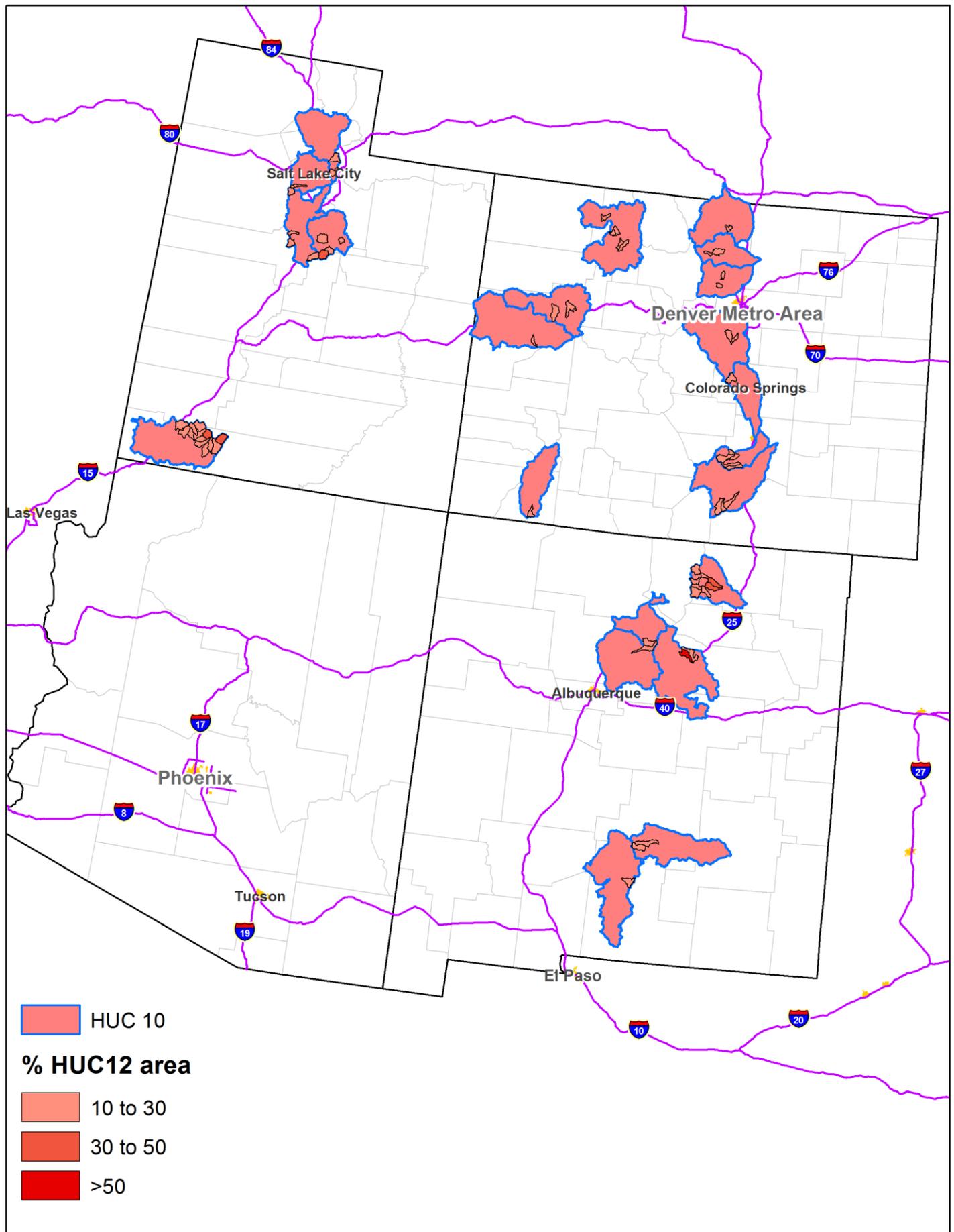


EXHIBIT B- Hydrologic Unit Codes of Priority Sub Watersheds

State	County	HUC12 ID
Colorado	Boulder	101900050303
Colorado	Boulder	101900050404
Colorado	Douglas	101900020607
Colorado	Garfield	140100050603
Colorado	Garfield	140100050701
Colorado	Huerfano	110200060409
Colorado	Huerfano	110200060406
Colorado	Huerfano	110200060405
Colorado	Jefferson	101900020701
Colorado	La Plata	140801040804
Colorado	Larimer	101900070305
Colorado	Larimer	101900060207
Colorado	Mesa	140100051307
Colorado	Pueblo	110200021105
Colorado	Pueblo	110200021001
Colorado	Pueblo	110200021104
Colorado	Pueblo	110200021106
Colorado	Pueblo	110200021002
Colorado	Routt	140500010507
Colorado	Routt	140500010404
Colorado	Routt	140500010505
Colorado	Routt	140500010511
Colorado	Routt	140500010605
Colorado	Teller	110200030201

State	County	HUC12 ID
Utah	Iron	150100080402
Utah	Iron	150100080101
Utah	Kane	150100080103
Utah	Kane	150100080201
Utah	Kane	150100080202
Utah	Kane	150100080104
Utah	Kane	150100080205

Utah	Kane	150100080203
Utah	Kane	150100080105
Utah	Kane	150100080107
Utah	Morgan	160201020104
Utah	Salt Lake	160202040103
Utah	Sanpete	160202020201
Utah	Sanpete	160202010103
Utah	Summit	160201020102
Utah	Utah	160202020105
Utah	Utah	160202020205
Utah	Utah	160202010201
Utah	Utah	160202010203
Utah	Utah	160202010701
Utah	Utah	160202020202
Utah	Washington	150100080106
Utah	Washington	150100080301
Utah	Washington	150100080102

State	County	HUC12 ID
New Mexico	Colfax	110800020108
New Mexico	Colfax	110800020109
New Mexico	Colfax	110800020105
New Mexico	Colfax	110800020106
New Mexico	Colfax	110800020104
New Mexico	Colfax	110800020302
New Mexico	Colfax	110800020101
New Mexico	Colfax	110800020103
New Mexico	Lincoln	130600080105
New Mexico	Lincoln	130600080103
New Mexico	Otero	130500031501
New Mexico	San Miguel	130600010804
New Mexico	San Miguel	130600010805
New Mexico	Santa Fe	130201011202
New Mexico	Santa Fe	130202010102

## EXHIBIT C- Goal Guidance

### Purpose

This reference is provided to help ensure that applicant and reviewers use language in a consistent manner, goals and metrics are clearly stated, and proposals clearly present a logical work flow. Applicants are strongly encouraged to incorporate the following guidance in their proposals.

### Definitions

- **Goal-** The end result toward which effort is directed. Goals statements are declarative, affirmative statements about the desired future condition. Goals should be specific, measurable, attainable, and time-bound.
  - *Example: By 2021, the water supply for Anytown is significantly safeguarded from catastrophic impact of wildfire through the collective forest restoration action of over 50% of the 1,200 non-industrial private forest landowners in the Upper Trout sub watershed.*
- **Objective-** Interdependent outcomes that, taken together, are necessary to achieve a goal. Similar to goals, objectives are declarative statements. In nearly all cases, multiple objectives will support a single goal.
  - *Example: (in order to achieve our goal) By 2018, no fewer than 100 landowners have agreed to meet with a professional forester and develop a stewardship plan for their property.*
- **Strategy-** A plan of action to achieve an objective. Unlike goal and objective statements, strategies are inherently action (verb) oriented.
  - *Example: (in order to achieve our objective) Launch two outreach campaigns in spring and fall 2018 to 1,000 targeted landowners across the larger Bear watershed in which the Upper Trout sub watershed sits.*
- **Metric-** A quantifiable measure used to track progress towards an objective. Metrics tie to objectives and measure the relative success of various strategies. Metrics are measures of what needs to happen, not what did happen.
  - *Example: (in order to achieve our outcome thru our strategy) 20% of landowners respond to our outreach and 40% of those respondents request to meet with a forester.*

### Sample Goal, objective, strategy, metric hierarchy

#### Goal

1. Objective
  - 1.1.1.Strategy
  - 1.1.2.Strategy
  - 1.1.3.Strategy
- 1.2. Metric
2. Objective
  - 2.1.1.Strategy
  - 2.1.2.Strategy
- 2.2. Metric
3. Objective
  - 3.1.1.Strategy
- 3.2. Metric

## EXHIBIT D- Budget Guidance and Template

### Purpose

A complete detailed budget- cost and narrative- must accompany all proposals. Applicants must use the appended template and adhere to the following instruction.

### Instruction

For each of the following budget line items, applicants should quantify estimated costs using the spreadsheet template. A complete and detailed budget consists of two parts: 1) use of the template to record costs and 2) a separate narrative sheet explaining the rationale behind those expenses.

Every anticipated expense must be accompanied by a budget narrative. A budget narrative explains or justifies the estimated costs by line item or category in the budget. Proper budget narratives should explain how the costs associated with each line item or category relate to the implementation of the project as outlined in the proposal being submitted. In essence, the budget narrative ties the proposal budget to the proposal deliverables or statement of work. Narratives should be *written concisely* and in such a way that someone not specifically familiar with the project can conceptually understand the rationale, purpose, and calculation of the anticipated costs identified. Even if the budget narrative details are included in the proposal, they must also be included in the budget section.

### Budget Line Item Definitions

- **Personnel:** Enter a description of the itemized personnel (staff) costs requested. These costs should only include the labor costs of the organization's staff assigned to the project, and not those of contractors or other third parties. Provide a brief explanation of the work to be completed by each position budgeted for the project and how the work of each budgeted position will support the purpose and goals of the overall project.
- **Fringe:** Document the fringe benefits rate applied to each budgeted staff position assigned to the project. These costs should only include the fringe costs of the organization's staff and not those of contractors or other third parties.
- **Travel:** Describe the purpose of the travel and the assumptions used in estimating the cost of all travel. Do not lump trips together into one amount, rather, itemize by travel type. Each Travel line item should include a narrative that addresses the purpose of the travel and how it assists with accomplishing the goals of the project. These costs should not include the travel costs being paid for by subrecipients, contractors or other third parties, which should be included in the Contractual Services budget category and incorporated in the applicable Subgrant or Contract budget item.
- **Materials and Supplies:** Itemize each item to be purchased for this project, the intended purpose, and how the estimated costs were determined for each item. Routine materials or supplies for your organization's operational needs should not be included here, only those specific to the project.
- **Contractual Services:** Contractual Services are defined as any agreement issued to a third party to assist with the completion of the project. Define the specific agreement type. This can be in the form of a subgrant or sub/contract (which would include consultant costs), and describe the purpose of the as it relates to accomplishing project goals. Itemize each contractual services cost budgeted for this project per agreement. Do not lump multiple contractual services items into one line item. Explain the need for each agreement and how their use will support the purpose and goals of the project.
- **Other Direct Costs:** Enter a description of each budgeted cost item that does not appropriately fit in the above categories. Explain the need for each item, how it will further the objectives of the project, and how the cost estimation was determined.
- **Indirect Costs:** Indirect Costs are defined as costs incurred for a common purpose, benefiting more than one objective project, or program, and cannot be easily assignable to the outcome, project or program specifically attaining the related benefits. Identify the base/MTDC elements used to calculate the indirect costs for this project and if the costs and base were derived from a valid NICRA, the de minimis rate & base. Applicants must provide a copy of their approved and valid NICRA with their application in order for indirect cost reimbursements to be considered. If applicants do not have a current and valid NICRA, please contact AFF to discuss options.