

2015-2016 SRAFPF Grant Program FAQ

October 26, 2015

How do I obtain a CalMAPPER ID number for the Project Application Form?

The CalMAPPER ID number is not required during the Project Application phase. It will be a required part of a project after work has begun on an awarded grant.

The CalMAPPER ID is intended to be used in situations where a proposed project is within or immediately adjacent to an already existing project within CalMAPPER. If the Project Applicant is not aware of an already existing project, the CalMAPPER ID number field on the Project Application Form should be left blank. If your project is building off of, or being conducted adjacent to, an existing fire prevention project, contact your local CAL FIRE Unit to ask if the project has a CalMAPPER ID.

What is the maximum allowable administrative or indirect charge?

The inclusion of an indirect or administrative charge is acceptable for this grant program. It is calculated as a percentage of direct charges (minus any funds for equipment purchase) requested by the grantee. The maximum administrative charge may be no more than 12%.

What is considered to be a matching or in-kind contribution?

Matching or In-kind contributions are any contribution to the project (financial, volunteer time, employee time [paid by another funding source], services funded by another source, etc.) that contribute to achievement of the deliverables spelled out in the Project Application.

Would applying for two grants from different sources at the same time negate our application through the SRA Grant Program?

Applying for both grant programs at the same time would not negate the application. However, it is expected that you would not enter into an additional grant contract award for the same portions of the same project. If portions of the project were split, grants could be obtained from different sources for the split portions, not to exceed 100% of the project value. Attempts to bill two grants for the same work within a project would likely result in legal action by the State against the applicant.

Are Fiscal Sponsor Fees allowed to be included in the grant total along with other costs and expenses?

Yes as long as these costs are directly related to the grant project. The fees will be evaluated as part of the overall grant budget.

What are the rules regarding conducting grant work on private property?

If the project will accomplish work on private property that is not owned by the grantee, the grantee must secure written permission to conduct work on that property. The land use agreements must be kept on file by the grantee and available for inspection by State personnel upon request.

Commercialization of forest products may occur as a part of the work conducted during the grant. Since forest products income fluctuates, how can a potential grantee account for this during the application and grant phases of the project?

If commercialization occurs as a part of the process, any revenue from timber products will have to offset operating expenses. It is recommended that you use the price of forest products at the time of application to generate an estimate for budgeting purposes and not speculate on the future price of any forest products expected to be generated by project implementation. The income must be accounted for as a net zero gain in the project budget by the end of the project.

Can I apply for this grant for Fuels Reduction as a Fire Safe Council and not have a 501(c)3 sponsor?

Yes. So long as the Fire Safe Council is recognized by the California Fires Safe Council it is an eligible entity. Please see the "Eligibility" section on page 5 of the Procedural Guide for more information on eligible entities.

If my sponsoring 501(c)3 organization has lost its records can it still apply?

If the organization is a 501(c)(3) entity, the Secretary of State should have a record of the incorporation. If the organization was formed under the authority of a LAFCO, they should have record of this entity. Either way, we suggest you begin pursuing the back-up documentation needed. You can submit your application with a note that you are working on getting this documentation and your application may still be considered. However, you MUST have this documentation submitted to the Grants Management Unit by April 15, 2015 to be awarded a grant and enter into a contract with the State.

Will the grant pay for State Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) application fees or costs to have CEQA work completed?

Yes. These items should be included in the budget worksheet for your project. Standard DFW fees for CEQA documents can be found at <https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/CEQA/Fees>.

May a CAL FIRE employee conduct the initial CEQA work?

When CEQA work is required, a RPF or qualified environmental planner, not associated with CAL FIRE should be considered first to conduct the work. CAL FIRE employees may conduct the initial CEQA work for a public agency sponsored project when the grantee contracts for CEQA services with a CAL FIRE Unit. CAL FIRE will serve as the lead agency for CEQA work for non-public entities. If you plan to use a CAL FIRE employee to conduct the CEQA or any work in the project, you should contact them before submitting the application to ensure they will be able to accommodate the additional workload. Please refer to page 32 of the SRAFPF Grant Program Procedural Guide for additional discussion of CAL FIRE's role in CEQA.

In reading through the SRAFPF Grant Program Procedural Guide, it states that a CEQA document may be required. Would the CAL FIRE “1038i, Forest Fire Prevention Exemption” satisfy the CEQA component since this document is supposed to be CEQA compliant?

The California Forest Practice Rules Title 14CCR1038(i) Forest Fire Prevention Exemption will work provided you are in compliance with Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 4584(j), whereby harvesting is “limited to those trees that eliminate the vertical continuity of vegetative fuels and the horizontal continuity of tree crowns”, and; the proposed project is a forested area. Section 1038(i) would not be the appropriate CEQA document for modifying a non-forested environment. Refer to page 32 of the ‘Procedural Guide for STATE RESPONSIBILITY AREA FIRE PREVENTION FUND GRANT PROGRAM, APPENDIX B – CEQA Compliance’ for alternatives. Grantees are advised to itemize the State Department of Fish and Wildlife fee, if any, when preparing budgets during the application phase.

As grantee, do we ever take possession of any funds?

If your project is selected for funding there will be a mechanism for periodic reimbursement of the completed project work. Additionally, advanced payment of funds is allowed per the Advance Payment of Grant Funds (non-profits only) section on page 18 of the Procedure Guide.

Can we use the Cal OES Form 130 in place of the Board Resolution?

The OES form 130 will not work for the purpose of this grant. An approved action by the Board of Directors, specific to this project, will be required before entering into a contract with the State. This is not necessary for the Project Application phase but will be required prior to signing a grant award agreement. You may wish to include a note in your application that you are working on the Board approval requirement.

The proposed project includes a number of community outreach events. Can food be provided at these events and paid for by the grant?

There is nothing that specifically precludes this. However, it would not be considered to be a good use of grant funds and is strongly discouraged.

May an applicant submit additional documents with their application (i.e.-cover letter, letters of support from fire safe councils, county representatives, etc.)?

Yes. We are interested in letters of support. They will help illustrate community support. Please reference the project tracking number within the document and utilize the appropriate document naming convention for the electronic files when possible.

Appendix E, “Check Lists” contains two checklists on one page. Are all documents for both the “Application Checklist” and the “Agreement Checklist” required during the Application Phase (the current submittal phase)?

The single page of Appendix E (page 38) provides two distinct checklists. They are Application and Agreement. The Application Checklist is designed to help the applicant insure that he or she submits all required items for the Application phase only. The Agreement Checklist is only relevant to those entities awarded a grant during the Grant Agreement phase. The Agreement documents should not be submitted during the Application phase.