

**STAKEHOLDER PROCEDURAL GUIDE  
FOR  
CAL FIRE STATE RESPONSIBILITY AREA FIRE PREVENTION FUND**

# **FIRE PREVENTION GRANT PROGRAM (Drought Related)**

**AUTHORIZED BY  
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**State responsibility areas: fire prevention fees**

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## ***INTRODUCTION***

This procedural guide includes information for the use of grant funds provided by the State Responsibility Area Fire Prevention Fund (SRAFPF) and administered by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE). The guide addresses procedures for the Drought Related SRAFPF Fire Prevention Grant Program. The Fire Prevention Grant Program, among other things, provides funding for fire prevention projects related to fuel (vegetation) hazard reduction, fire prevention education and fire prevention planning and training that address wildfire risk to habitable structures in the SRA. Funding for SRA fire prevention grants has been provided only for the 2014-15 Fiscal Year.

### **Purpose:**

The purpose of all Drought Related SRAFPF Fire Prevention Grant Program projects is to undertake fire prevention activities that address the risk and potential impact of wildfire to habitable structures in the SRA as worsened by drought conditions.

### **Projects types:**

Projects include, but may not be limited to, those related to fuel (vegetation) hazard reduction, fire prevention education, and fire prevention training and planning that reduce the risk of wildfire upon habitable structures in the SRA as worsened by drought conditions.

Examples of qualifying project types include the following:

- Vegetation clearance in critical locations to reduce wildfire intensity and rate of spread;
- Selective tree removal (thinning) to improve forest health to withstand wildfire;
- Wildfire risk or related mapping;
- Fire prevention public education;
- Creation of strategic wildfire planning documents, such as a Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP);
- Creation or maintenance of fuel breaks in strategic locations, as identified in CAL FIRE Unit Fire Plans or a CWPP;
- Removing ladder fuels to reduce the risk of crown fires;
- Removing dead and dying trees;
- Community level fire prevention programs such as community chipping days, roadside chipping, and green waste bin programs;
- Modification of vegetation adjacent to roads to provide for safer ingress and egress of evacuating residents and responding emergency personnel; and
- Reduction of fuel loading around critical firefighting infrastructure, including, but not limited to, fire hydrants, water drafting locations, and staging areas.

## ***ELIGIBILITY, GRANT CONDITIONS AND IMPORTANT POINTS***

### **Eligibility**

Eligible grantees may be local entities including, but not limited to, local government, fire districts, community services districts, water districts, and special districts with SRA within their jurisdiction, or certified local conservation corps, Fire Safe Councils, or other nonprofit organizations. Per Section 30910(c) of the California Public Resources Code, "Nonprofit organization" means any California corporation organized under Section 501(c)(3) of the federal Internal Revenue Code.

### **Conditions**

1. Grants can be made only to "eligible" applicants.
2. Grants must be for projects within the SRA.
3. Activities under a grant are limited to those where the proposed activity addresses the risk or potential impact of wildfire to habitable structures in the SRA. The proposed project must be a qualifying activity; if it is not, the application will be considered ineligible.
4. Grantees must have the ability to satisfactorily plan, administer, and complete a fire prevention project applicable to the SRA.
5. For some projects, the grantee may be required to prepare a California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) document. When CAL FIRE is the lead agency, review and acceptance by CAL FIRE Headquarters staff of CEQA documents (in consultation with CAL FIRE Unit and Region CEQA coordinators) prepared by the grantee is required prior to commencing any on-the-ground activity.
6. For fuel reduction projects, certain steps are expected of a grantee:
  - A Registered Professional Forester will be required to design any fuel hazard reduction vegetation removal prescription and will have involvement/oversight in the removal of the vegetation.
  - Fuel reduction vegetation treatment prescriptions must focus on selectively removing understory trees and brush with a goal of reducing fire hazards, improving tree growth, and increasing forest resilience. In addition, trees and brush must be selected for removal and must include vegetation that eliminates the vertical continuity of vegetative fuels and the horizontal continuity of tree crowns for the purpose of reducing the rate of fire spread, duration and intensity, fuel ignitability, or ignition of tree crowns.
  - A project will include a pre and post-harvest evaluation of site conditions and project results relative to vegetative conditions that have been worsened by drought, and wildfire hazard reduction goal accomplishments.

7. The grantee must provide information necessary for CAL FIRE to enter the project into CAL MAPPER.
8. Grant requests must include a determination for the grant amount requested. Methodology must include the grant costs less any income from forest products or other revenues received from the grant implementation.
9. All project work related to grants must be completed by March 15, 2017, the termination date of the grant.

## **Important Points**

1. Project work may not commence until there is a fully executed agreement between CAL FIRE and the grantee.
2. No ground disturbing work may commence until the requirements of CEQA have been satisfied.
3. Agreements for funds approved by the Legislature must be executed (signed) within the period of availability provided for in the State Budget.
4. For any vegetation modification projects, the CAL FIRE Unit staff must be contacted to conduct an inspection of the modification efforts prior to invoicing CAL FIRE for completed work. CAL FIRE will conduct a spot inspection to verify that work to be invoiced has been satisfactorily completed. The invoice will be forwarded to Region Headquarters for review and then to Sacramento Headquarters for subsequent approval of payment. Expect payment to take four to eight weeks from the time an invoice is submitted.
5. A resolution or attesting document is required on all Fire Prevention project grants that involve nonprofit organizations and local government entities, such as Fire Protection Districts and Resource Conservation Districts. The attestee cannot be the same individual as designated by the board to sign the agreement. Please refer to the sample resolution (Appendix E).

Note: Where the line indicates 'whereas, the board designates (designee's title)', list the title rather than an individual's name. In the event the individual retires or leaves the organization, a new resolution designating a replacement would be required if a name is listed rather than the working title. The resolution should name the designee authorized to enter into agreements on behalf of the board, as well as the authorized signatory for invoices.

6. The SRA fire prevention grants are not designed for, nor intended to, create or support ongoing administrative positions.

## **REVIEW AND EVALUATION FACTORS**

### **Review Process**

The process to be used by CAL FIRE to review initial concepts and subsequent applications involves three levels: local – CAL FIRE Units/Contract Counties; regional – CAL FIRE Regions; and statewide – a statewide review team. The statewide review team prepares a list of recommended projects across all of the SRA for consideration by the Director of CAL FIRE. At each level emphasis will be placed on projects that address the risk and potential impact of wildfire to habitable structures in the SRA. CAL FIRE does not intend to approve a project that is in conflict or competes with another proposed or approved project.

The Director will make a decision based on recommendations of the statewide review team. The goal is to achieve a mix of projects that contributes as much as possible to fire prevention efforts that address the risk and potential impact of wildfire to habitable structures across the SRA. In some cases, this may mean selection of projects based on geographic and/or financial distribution related to the location of habitable structures in the SRA.

### **Evaluation Factors (Selection Criteria)**

In evaluating initial concepts and subsequent applications, CAL FIRE is seeking information that allows it to consider the following factors:

1. The project addresses risk and potential impact of wildfire (worsened by drought) to habitable structures in the SRA.
  - The project is in an area at or above a “Severe” Drought Intensity (Level D2) as indicated for the Western Region by the U.S. Drought Monitor at <http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/Home/RegionalDroughtMonitor.aspx?west>.
  - The project is fully defined.
  - The project includes SRA Fire Hazard Severity Rankings and indicates areas and their relative proportion of Very High, High and Moderate Fire Hazard Severity Zones as identified by the FRAP map [http://www.fire.ca.gov/fire\\_prevention/fire\\_prevention\\_wildland\\_zones\\_maps.php](http://www.fire.ca.gov/fire_prevention/fire_prevention_wildland_zones_maps.php).
  - The project is located near or substantially includes habitable structures at risk for potential damage from wildland fire in the SRA. Address the risk and/or potential impact of wildfire to habitable structures.
  - The project involves other assets related to habitable structures in the SRA that are at risk due to the potential impacts of wildfire. This encompasses community infrastructure including, but not limited to, buildings, domestic and community water supplies, power lines, and communications facilities. If the project does involve community infrastructure, address the risk and/or impact of wildfire to these assets.

2. The project is related to or part of a strategic plan(s).

- The project is included in or consistent with one or more of the following plans: CAL FIRE Unit or Contract County Fire Plan, a Community Wildfire Protection Plan, or another long term plan or program (such as Firewise) that addresses the risk and possible impact of wildfire to habitable structures in the SRA.
- The project proposes to create, or update, a long term fire hazard reduction planning document affecting or involving habitable structures in the SRA, such as a CWPP, Community Evacuation Plan, or other strategic planning document.
- The project takes into account other high priority projects in the last five years in the Unit/Contract County (approved, but not started; in progress; completed) and adds to these efforts.
- The project will lead to the completion of a high priority project in one or more of these plans which will tie to other projects.
- The project strategically advances the protection of the SRA WUI across a Region and/or the State.

3. Community support exists for the project.

- The project includes matching funds or in-kind contributions that will extend the impact of the proposed project.
- The project includes plans for external communications such as planned press releases, project signage, community meetings or field tours that all, or in part, reach owners and residents of habitable structures.

4. A plan to guide implementation.

- The project includes a time line that covers any limitations and milestones to reach during project implementation.

5. The budget is clear and reasonable.

- The proposed budget shows how grant funds will be spent.
- Costs are reasonable for the activity proposed.
- Non-administrative personnel costs are not included or are reasonable for the activity proposed.

6. Demonstrated capacity to administer a grant.

- The applicant shows an acceptable amount of experience in administering grants. Experience is largely based on successful administration of other grant-funded projects over the past five years.

## **CONCEPT AND APPLICATION PROCESS and PROJECT ADMINISTRATION**

The overall application process for the SRAFPF Program is a four stage process. During Concept Proposal (Stage 1), interested applicants will submit a Concept Proposal that will allow CAL FIRE Local Unit staff the opportunity to review and qualify the project for the Project Application (Stage 2).

During the Project Application process, applicants will submit a more detailed application expanding on the components identified during the Concept Proposal.

Stage 3 & 4 are administrative steps that require each applicant to provide the complete application package to develop a final grant agreement.

The Concept Proposal is covered in detail below. ***Information on the Application Form and related administrative requirements is in development and will be posted on this site prior to implementation of the application process in January 2015.***

**Concept Proposal** – In order to be considered for the application process, interested applicants must submit a Concept Proposal to CAL FIRE. CAL FIRE will review the Concept Proposal for general consistency with the requirements of the funding and Applicant Eligibility and Criteria. Proposals that meet these requirements will be asked to submit a Project Application.

Concept Proposals are to be prepared and submitted using the on-line form at [www.fire.ca.gov/fire\\_prevention/downloads/SRA\\_Grant\\_ConceptProposal.pdf](http://www.fire.ca.gov/fire_prevention/downloads/SRA_Grant_ConceptProposal.pdf). Concept Proposals may also be mailed to:

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection  
Resource Management  
Grants Management Unit  
P.O. Box 944246  
Sacramento, CA 94244-2460

A Concept Proposal Instruction Sheet can be found on the Internet at: [www.fire.ca.gov/fire\\_prevention/downloads/SRA\\_Grants\\_ConceptProposal\\_InstructionSheet.pdf](http://www.fire.ca.gov/fire_prevention/downloads/SRA_Grants_ConceptProposal_InstructionSheet.pdf).

A copy of the Concept Proposal Instructions may also be found in Appendix A.

The Concept Proposal form must be submitted to Sacramento on or before November 14, 2014.

When Concept Proposals are submitted to CAL FIRE, the Grants Management Unit will log in the proposal and enter pertinent information into a database. Proposals will then enter the review process. If the Concept Proposal meets eligibility and funding criteria, the Grants Management Unit

will notify the proposal submitter and request that they submit their Project Application. Those individuals not successful in their Concept Proposal will be notified; their proposal will not be evaluated further.

Concept Proposal notification letters will be sent from the Grants Management Unit on or before January 2, 2015.

## **APPENDICES**

## ***Appendix A***

### ***Concept Proposal Instructions***

#### **CAL FIRE State Responsibility Area Fire Prevention Fund Projects**

#### **Concept Proposal Form Completion Instructions**

1. Create a name that will be the identifying name throughout the project.
2. Enter both the County in which the project will occur and the CAL FIRE Unit or Contract County in which the project will occur. Contact your local Unit gain a better understanding of jurisdiction if it is unclear.
3. Sponsoring Organization: Enter the proper or full name of the organization.  
Organization Type: Use the drop down box to identify the organization type. Enter organization type in Other box only if Other was chosen in the drop down box.  
Project Manager:  
    Title: Enter the title of the Project Manager as related to the organization.  
    First Name and Last Name: Enter the first and last name of the Project Manager.  
Address 1: Enter the physical address of the organization.  
Address 2: Enter the secondary or mailing address of the organization if different than Address 1.  
City, State, and Zip Code: Enter according to the mailing address.  
Phone Number: Enter the primary phone number where the Project Manager may be reached.  
Secondary Phone Number: Enter the secondary phone number where Project Manager may be reached or an office phone number for the organization.  
Email Address: Enter the best Email address for contact, which may be the Project Manager or the organization.  
Fax Number: Enter the fax number for the organization.
4. Enter the activity for which funding is being requested. If funding is being sought for more than one activity, Concept Proposals will need to be filled out for each activity separately. Examples: Development or updating of local plans, such as CWPP, risk mapping or other similar activities for habitable structures that address the risk and/or potential impact of wildfire in the SRA.
5. Enter the funding amount being requested in dollars.
6. Enter the projected start and end dates. Take note of the mandatory completion date.
7. Enter the general location or center of the project as Latitude-Longitude, Degrees, Minutes, Seconds in NAD83.

If possible, attach a parcel polygon in one of the formats listed on the form. Please attach the project name or title and the sponsoring organization so that reference can be made if the form and file become separated.

8. Enter the name of the at-risk community. If the community in which the project will be located is not a recognized Community At-Risk, enter "None" in the text box.
9. Check all that apply. It is possible that a project may overlay more than one fire hazard severity zone.
10. Enter worst case drought measurement (D2-D4) as specified on the US Drought Monitor for the State of California on or after July 1, 2014. The link provided on the concept proposal will allow the applicant to view current data. Past data is also available on the left side of the page.
11. Enter the project description. Note: there is a limit of characters in these fields.
  - a.) Enter acres within the project and acres to be treated ONLY if the project is fuel treatment related. Leave the boxes associated with a.) blank if the project is not fuel treatment related.
  - b.) Enter a description of the SRA that the project will be encompassed by a non-fuel treatment related project. Leave the box associated with b.) blank if submitting a fuel related project.
  - c.) Enter the description of the activities and costs associated with the project concept as described on the form. Provide the anticipated direct personnel costs.
12. Enter the goals and objectives of the project. This should include a well-developed overview of what the project will be and what is intended to be accomplished. Also include expected milestones that take into account seasonal limitations or restrictions. Provide a list of measurable outcomes to evaluate the project's overall success.
13. Enter a specific and general discussion about how risk from wildfire will be reduced for habitable structures in the SRA. Include the number of habitable structures affected by the project.
14. Enter a specific and general discussion about how risk from wildfire will be reduced for infrastructure that directly supports and/or is critical to habitable structures in the SRA. Include the number and types of infrastructure that will be affected by the project.
15. Enter other funding sources that will be leveraged to extend the benefit of the funds allocated by this submittal. Include all funding sources and their combined total, both in terms of actual funds and percentage of match for the grant for which the concept proposal is being submitted. Volunteer, community, or company employee time donation may be considered to be valuation for match criteria.

16. Enter the community support as listed on the form. Also, enter communication plans such as planned press releases, education signs to be posted at the project site, community meetings, etc.
17. Identify whether the project is a part of, or consistent with, local and Unit or Contract County Fire Plans. Enter all plans with which the project is or will be consistent. Examples could include, but not be limited to, CWPP, County General Plans, etc.
18. Enter other projects (past or present) that will be positively affected by the completion of this proposed project. Also, indicate if this project will be positively affected by other projects in the area. List only projects that have been conducted or completed within the past 5 years.
19. Enter the organization's or Project Manager's past experience with similar grants or project management opportunities. If the organization or Project Manager does not have any past experience in this type of grant management, list a plan to partner with another person or organization that can help manage the project. For the Project Manager, list any project related grant experience, the status, and outcomes of grants under the Project Manager's control.

Enter the name of all people who will responsible for project expenses and the maintenance of project records. Also, enter all administrative expenses that are expected for the project.

20. Enter the submitter's name and the date on which the proposal was completed.

**INCLUDE PICTURE OR PDF OF CONCEPT FORM**