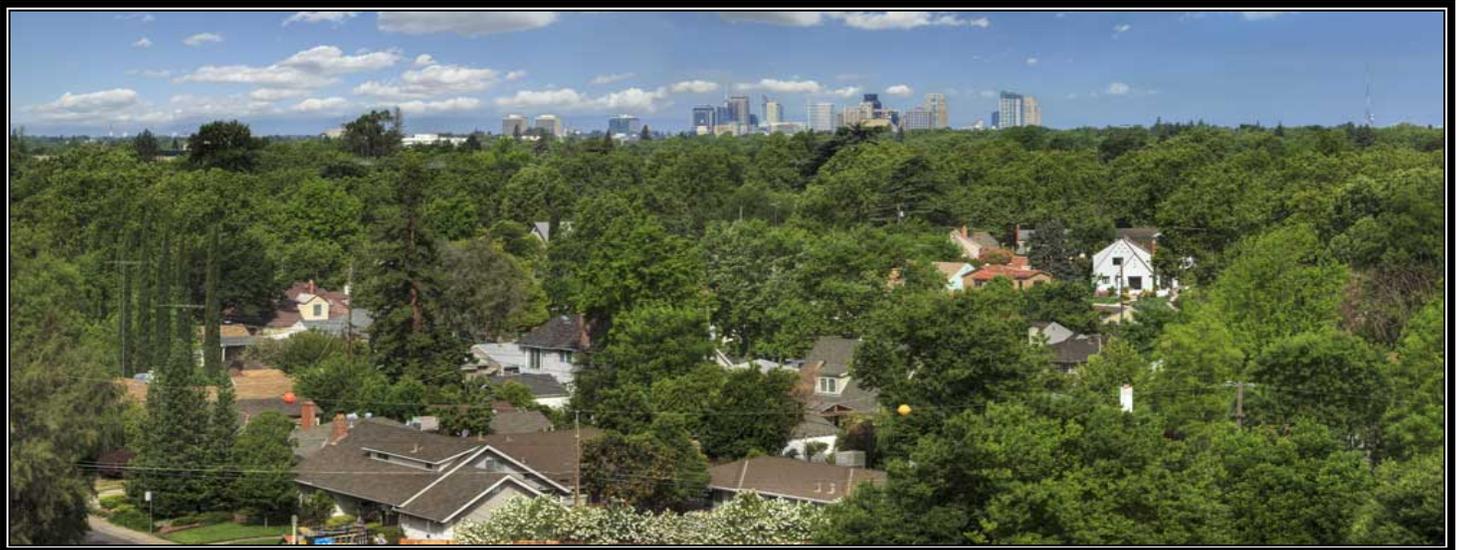




State of California
Department of Forestry & Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)
Urban and Community Forestry Program
Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund Grants

Urban Forest Management For GHG Reduction
Request for Proposals
2014/2015
Concept Proposals Due: November 13, 2014



CAL FIRE Urban and Community Forestry will offer workshops on the entire grant application and administration process for all prospective applicants.
Please watch http://www.fire.ca.gov/resource_mgt/resource_mgt_urbanforestry_grants.php for dates, times, and locations of these workshops or contact your Regional Urban Forester (Appendix E of Urban & Community Forestry Grants Procedural Guide for 2014/2015) for details.

Grant programs authorized by:

The California Urban Forestry Act of 1978 (Public Resources Code 4799.06 – 4799.12)

A copy of which can be found at:

http://www.fire.ca.gov/resource_mgt/resource_mgt_urbanforestry.php

Grant funds made available from the following sources:

The California Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund

and/or

USDA Forest Service Urban & Community Forestry Program Fund

Urban & Community Forestry Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund Grants: Urban Forest Management Plans 2014-2015

IMPORTANT NOTE:

Please also see and refer to the *Urban & Community Forestry Grants Procedural Guide for 2014/2015*. This document is available at:

http://www.fire.ca.gov/resource_mgt_urbanforestry_grants.php

or

<http://www.ufe.org/grantinfo.lasso>

Grant applicants are responsible to meet the requirements of both documents. This RFP document takes precedence in the case of a conflict between the two documents.

Introduction:

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) Urban & Community Forestry Program works to optimize the benefits of trees and related vegetation through multiple-objective projects that provide environmental services and cost-effective solutions to the needs of urban communities and local agencies, including, but not limited to, increased water supply, clean air and water, reduced energy use, flood and storm water management, recreation, urban revitalization, improved public health, and producing useful products such as bio-fuel, clean energy, and high quality wood. Such efforts play a significant role in meeting the state's greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reduction targets. CAL FIRE encourages resident participation in the development and implementation of state and local agency and non-profit organization urban forestry programs and projects.

The CAL FIRE Urban & Community Forestry Program has set aside funds to provide grants to organizations that wish to create or implement a “*Urban Forest Management For GHG Reduction*” project. The funding level of each CAL FIRE Urban & Community Forestry grant program may be adjusted based on the applications received and funds available to CAL FIRE for these purposes. Strong preference will be given to communities identified as environmental justice communities utilizing the CalEnviroScreen 2.0 tool that can be found at: <http://oehha.ca.gov/ej/ces2.html>.

Eligible applicants include cities, counties, qualifying districts, or nonprofit organizations qualified under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code (PRC 5096.605). Districts include, but are not limited to, school, park, recreation, water, and local taxing districts.

Purpose:

The purpose of this grant program is to fund the development and implementation of urban forest management activities to reduce GHG and to be carried out by a jurisdiction to optimize the benefits of its urban forest. Such activities will be holistic, long term, include the entire jurisdiction, take an ecosystem management approach and may include an inventory, analysis, training and/or educational component. No other practices may be funded by this grant program.

Project Rating Criteria:

All content of this RFP and the accompanying “Urban & Community Forestry Grants Procedural Guide for 2014/2015” document may be utilized for rating purposes. See below for specific information that will be utilized to rate projects.

Conditions:

All of the following conditions must be met for a proposed urban forestry management plan to be eligible for a grant:

- Grant requests must be for doing tree inventory work and/or establishing a new management plan or updating an existing inventory or management plan as well as associated mapping and analysis.
- The project will lead to sequestration of significant amounts of GHG and/or avoid emissions of significant amounts of GHG over a 40 year period (see “GHG Tracking and Reporting” below).
- The applicant must be a city, county, or district.
- The amount requested must be between \$150,000 and \$750,000.
- An applicant may only submit one application for this grant program in this fiscal year.
- Applicants must show proof of an existing urban forest/street tree protection system (city ordinance, general plan element, etc.).
- Applicants must show proof of having an existing urban forester, arborist, or other qualified position responsible for urban forest resources or have such a professional under contract.
- A project must be located in, or immediately adjacent to, an “urban area” or “urban cluster” as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau.
(<http://www.census.gov/geo/www/ua/2010urbanruralclass.html>)
- The applicant has complied (and will comply) in all respects with all applicable local and county ordinances, and all applicable state and federal laws and regulations, including the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).
- An inventory must be completed before developing a management plan.
- The management plan must be a long term (40-50 year), holistic document, not solely a maintenance plan.
- There shall be a provision for periodic review of the management plan.
- Inventory data collected must follow the criteria set forth in Appendix G of the *Urban & Community Forestry Grants Procedural Guide*.
- Applicants must demonstrate how they will implement and utilize the inventory, analysis, and/or Management Plan.
- Applicants must agree to refer to the Management Plan as a guiding policy document in an ordinance, a general plan element or another binding, enforceable way as approved by CAL FIRE staff.
- An education component may be included but must not be more than 20% of the project budget.
- Applicants must provide an electronic and printed copy of all grant products to CAL FIRE Urban & Community Forestry at the conclusion of the grant.
- CAL FIRE’s Urban and Community Forestry Program and the funding source must be acknowledged in any documents or other media produced.

Desirable Concept Proposal Attributes:

- The project will take place in a CalEnviroScreen 2.0 identified community.
- The project will serve a CalEnviroScreen 2.0 identified community.
- The project will commit the jurisdiction to a systematic strategy for long term management of

its entire urban forest resource.

- The project will produce a product or products that will be widely available for public consumption.
- The product produced will be compatible with the jurisdiction's other policies and ordinances and will not conflict with any state or federal laws or regulations.
- The project will have a provision for periodic review and adjustment of the plan utilizing public opinion and the most current science and information available.
- The project has an educational component and develops public awareness of the need for expanding and managing urban forest resources.
- The inventory and analysis will be used to inform the management plan.
- The plan will be implemented and is somehow tied to a city ordinance or general plan element or other acceptable enforceable mechanism.
- The planning process will perform mapping and analysis that leads to a well-informed plan or will utilize existing maps and analysis for the same.
- The plan is referred to in a Climate Action Plan or similar plan.

Ineligible Projects:

- No practices other than those described above may be funded by this grant program without prior written approval by CAL FIRE.
- Projects that will supplant a locally funded budget item rather than supplement it.

Ineligible Costs:

This grant cannot finance any undertaking or complete any practice designed to supplant rather than supplement existing local agency activities. Such ineligible practices shall consist of any request that CAL FIRE furnish grants to take the place of a regular or ongoing fiscal commitment to a program or project by a local government. Any practices that are required as mitigation of any kind may not be financed by this grant program. Additionally, costs other than those explicitly stated as eligible costs above may not be paid for by this grant program.

For projects that include an Urban or Community Forestry education program, no more than 20% of grant funds may be used towards each of these activities. These activities as part of the overall project can be shown as project match dollars by the applicant.

Cost share:

These grants are to share the cost of eligible urban forestry projects. The proportion of the project's cost funded by CAL FIRE Urban & Community Forestry shall not be greater than 75%. Matching requirements (25%) for state funds may be met with in-kind activities or materials related to the project, as well as with any state funding source related to the project that is not the same as the state source of funding awarded by CAL FIRE. USDA Forest Service funds granted by the Urban and Community Forestry Program can be matched by non-USDA Forest Service federal funding.

For example:

Total Project = \$1,000,000.00
CAL FIRE Request = \$750,000.00
Minimum match required = \$250,000.00

Important Notes on Cost Share:

Projects taking place in environmental justice communities as identified using CalEnviroScreen 2.0 criteria will be eligible to have their cost share requirement completely waived by CAL FIRE. This request must be made during the concept proposal process by checking the appropriate box on the form.

Projects that will serve a CalEnviroScreen 2.0 will be eligible to have increased cost share of up to 90% of project costs with a 10% matching contribution in the form of material, services, equipment, or funds from any non-state source. Such communities must be able to prove they meet the criteria. Please see Procedural Guide for further details.

GHG Tracking and Reporting

The State of California requires that grant projects track their carbon sequestration and avoided emissions, as well as any emissions a project may have. CAL FIRE has worked with the California Air Resources Board (CARB), the USDA Forest Service (USFS), and other partners to develop a methodology and tools for meeting these reporting requirements.

For application purposes, estimates of carbon emissions and reductions must be as accurate as possible. Any deviation from the suggested tool and methodology below must be explained, and prior approval for the deviation must be approved by CAL FIRE.

Reporting must be done for each grant project progress reporting period (quarterly).

If improved tools become available during the project period, grantees may request CAL FIRE to approve an updated tool or methodology to increase accuracy or reduce costs with the same accuracy. Increased cost and/or reduced accuracy will not be approved.

Many projects may have a tree planting component, even if that is not the focus of the project. The suggested tool for tree planting is the USDA Forest Service Urban Tree Carbon Calculator. This tool can be found at the following web page:

http://www.fire.ca.gov/resource_mgt/resource_mgt_urbanforestry.php

Projects must project their GHG reductions and emissions for a minimum of 40 years. Direct sequestration of GHG and any avoided GHG emissions resulting from co-benefits of the project may be taken into consideration. When reporting, the projected direct sequestration must be reported separately from the avoided emissions. In addition, any emissions associated with the project must be reported. A net GHG benefit must result when taking these three reported numbers into account.

See for example:

CO2 Stored By Trees	-24,089	metric tonnes (t)
CO2 Avoided Emissions By Trees	-29,158	t
CO2 Emitted By Project	+1,000	t
Total CO2 Reduction	-52,247	t

For other project considerations, applicants must identify the tools that will be utilized to meet the project GHG reporting requirements above, and provide a justification. All calculations must be clearly shown.

Application Process:

The first step is to complete a Concept Proposal. If your Concept Proposal is selected, you will be asked to complete a Project Application. The Concept Proposal can be found at:

http://www.fire.ca.gov/resource_mgmt_urbanforestry_grants.php

or

<http://www.ufe.org/grantinfo.lasso>

- Concept proposals must be submitted electronically in the provided format by November 13, 2014.
- Email or electronic submissions other than in the provided format will not be accepted unless alternative arrangements are made with Urban & Community Forestry Program staff at least two weeks prior to the deadline.
- Do not send unsolicited materials. Doing so will result in rejection of the application.
- In the case of technical difficulties or an inability to utilize the online format, please contact your CAL FIRE Regional Urban Forester for authorization to use alternative grant submittal procedures (see “*Urban & Community Forestry Grants Procedural Guide for 2014/2015*” Appendix E).
- Late submissions will be rejected. No exceptions. Late is defined as: after 11:59 PM PST on the due date according to CAL FIRE’s email system.

Using the submit button at the end of the form field will submit the concept application electronically. Before clicking to submit your concept application, please print a copy for your records and go to the file menu in your current version of Adobe Acrobat Reader (<http://get.adobe.com/reader/>) and select the “save a copy” option. This will allow applicants to retain a copy of the application for their records.

Information required on the Concept Proposal shall include:

Complete the online application and follow the format, directions about size limitations etc. Failure to fully complete the form will result in rejection of the application.

The project description should include a description of the project, the number and job nature of the people involved in the project and the source of funds, materials, equipment or services to be provided by the applicant. Provide your proposed budget following the format provided in the concept proposal form.

Project Timeline:

Projects Completed By December 31, 2019

Projects Closed By June 1, 2020

No Reimbursement Possible After this date

Note: Please see *Urban & Community Forestry Grants Procedural Guide for 2014/2015* for reporting requirements for this grant program.

What happens after submitting a Concept Proposal?

(Please see APPENDIX H of the *Urban & Community Forestry Grants Procedural Guide for 2014/2015* for a CAL FIRE Urban & Community Forestry Program Grant Process Flow Chart).

Concept Proposal Review and Filing

Upon receipt of a Concept Proposal for an urban forestry project grant, CAL FIRE Urban & Community Forestry staff or a designee of the CAL FIRE Urban & Community Forestry Program Manager shall review it for conformance with the California Urban Forestry Act of 1978 (Public Resource Code 4799.06 to 4799.12), The California Code of Regulations (Title 14, Division 1.5, Chapter 9.7), this Request For Proposals, and the *Urban & Community Forestry Grants Procedural Guide*. Such review may include an inspection of the project area, if applicable.

If the Concept Proposal is found incomplete in a material way or the proposed project is not eligible for a grant, the applicant will be informed that the Concept Proposal is ineligible. Only when a Concept Proposal is complete and the project is deemed eligible for a grant, will CAL FIRE Urban & Community Forestry staff file the Concept Proposal.

Notification of Application Status

CAL FIRE Urban & Community Forestry staff shall notify each applicant whose Concept Proposal has been filed and reviewed of the status of its proposal within ten working days of the completion of review.

(1) For those Concept Proposals that have ranked high enough in the initial review, CAL FIRE shall notify the applicant and invite them to submit a Project Application for a grant for the project. Invitation for a Project Application is NOT a guarantee of funding. Once a Project Application is submitted, CAL FIRE Urban & Community Forestry staff will notify the applicant if a grant will be awarded as the circumstances allow. The applicant may then either withdraw their Project Application or complete the negotiations and execute a grant agreement. When the grant agreement is executed, the Director of CAL FIRE will make the grant funds available to the recipient in the manner and at the times specified in the agreement. Do not begin work on a project prior to receiving a fully executed grant agreement. Doing so may result in the project being ineligible for reimbursement.

(2) For those Concept Proposals that are eligible but for which there are no existing funds due to ranking, CAL FIRE shall notify the applicant that they will be invited to submit a Project Application if funds become available during the fiscal year.

Administration: To receive a grant, successful applicants must enter into a grant agreement with CAL FIRE. Grant recipients must agree to complete their project and allow for periodic inspections. In return, CAL FIRE agrees to share the cost of the project.

Technical Assistance: For technical assistance in preparing the Concept Proposal, the applicant should contact the CAL FIRE Regional Urban Forester located in the area nearest to the proposed project (see *Urban & Community Forestry Grants Procedural Guide* APPENDIX E):

Request for Record Review:

Within ten days of the receipt of notice that the application has been denied the applicant may request that the Director of CAL FIRE personally reconsider the decision of rejection. The request shall identify the applicant and the proposed project, and shall briefly state the applicant's reasons for requesting reconsideration. The Director shall consider the application and all of the correspondence from interested parties in reviewing the decision.

Final Decision by the Director of CAL FIRE:

If the Director finds that the decision to reject the application conforms to these guidelines and the Urban Forestry Act, the Director shall uphold the decision. If the Director finds that the decision to reject the application does not conform to these guidelines or the Act, the Director may approve the application.

Federal Affiliation

This program is made possible through a cooperative relationship with the USDA Forest Service.

In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.)

To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.