

**Announcement for Proposals, 2003-4
Joint Fire Science Program**

U.S. Department of the Interior

**Bureau of Indian Affairs
Bureau of Land Management
National Park Service
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
U.S. Geological Survey**

U.S. Department of Agriculture

Forest Service

Opens October 15, 2002

Closes January 6, 2003

This Announcement for Proposals contains two task statements on developing information dissemination and decision support systems and on integrated technology transfer tools.

Announcement for Proposals

by the
Joint Fire Science Program

(Note: The Joint Fire Science Program previously posted Requests for Proposals (RFPs). These are now called Announcements for Proposals (AFPs).

A. Program Description

The Joint Fire Science Program (JFSP) is a partnership of six federal wildland management and research agencies with a need to address problems associated with managing accumulating wildland fuels (combustible material, generally living and dead plant materials), fire regimes, and fire-impacted ecosystems on lands administered by the partner agencies. The partner agencies include the USDA Forest Service and five bureaus in the Department of the Interior (Bureau of Indian Affairs, Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the U.S. Geological Survey). For the purposes of this Announcement for Proposals (AFP), "wildlands" are considered to be forests and woodlands, shrublands, grasslands, and associated wetlands and riparian areas.

Wildland fuels have been accumulating during at least the past half-century due to wildland fire management policies, wildland management practices, and other factors. As demonstrated in the wildland fires of 2002, the additional fuels contribute to intense fire behavior and increase the resistance of fires to control. Consequently, property and natural resources have been destroyed, costs of fire management have escalated, fire dependent ecosystems have deteriorated, and the risks to human life remain high.

The Congress, agency administrators, JFSP partners, and others have recognized that the accumulation of wildland fuels must be reduced in order to reduce the human threat from fire and maintain natural resource values. Congress directed the Department of the Interior and the USDA Forest Service to develop a Joint Fire Science Plan to provide science-based support to land management agencies as they address this need. The JFSP was established with the 1998 Appropriation for Interior and Related Agencies to help ensure that cooperating Federal land management agencies expedite scientifically sound, efficient, systematic, and effective solutions and monitoring programs that cross agency jurisdictions and fuel types.

The 1998 Joint Fire Science Plan addressed four issues (Principal Purposes) critical to the success of the fuels management and fire use programs. These included wildland fuels inventory and mapping, evaluation of fuels treatments, scheduling of fuels treatments, and monitoring and evaluation. The Congress included additional direction in the 2001 Appropriation for Interior and Related Agencies. In addition to the four original Principal Purposes, the JFSP was directed to focus attention on such issues as protocols for evaluating post fire stabilization and rehabilitation projects, aircraft based remote sensing, and regional/local issues.

For further background on the goals of the JFSP, those considering submitting proposals and other interested parties are encouraged to review the Joint Fire Science Plan which is available via the Internet at: http://www.nifc.gov/joint_fire_sci/jointfiresci.html. In addition, the JFSP issued AFPs in June 1998, February 1999, February 2000, and February 2001 and subsequently selected and funded over 160 projects. Previous AFPs and lists of the funded projects can also be found at the web site. This AFP contains two Task Statements for which proposals are sought. The Governing Board encourages proposals from all interested parties. However, because the focus of the JFSP is on wildland fire and fuels issues on Federal wildlands, evidence of the involvement of a Federal

cooperator must be included in all proposals. Furthermore the tasks under this AFP specifically focus on developing tools and products for the use of the management and policy community. **Therefore, proposals that do not have clear documentation of direct user community involvement for product development and evaluation will not be considered for funding.** Non-Federal proposers are required to ensure that a Federal cooperator participates in development and submission of proposals. The Federal cooperator is the direct recipient of the funding.

Proposals and all associated materials, including signatures, submitted in response to this AFP must be received by the close of business on January 6, 2003 to be considered. Materials received after the closing date, including proposal revisions, will not be considered. Questions and proposals should be directed to:

Dr. Bob Clark
Program Manager
Joint Fire Science Program
National Interagency Fire Center
3833 S. Development Ave.
Boise ID 83705
phone (208) 387-5349
facsimile (208) 387-5960
email Bob_Clark@nifc.blm.gov

Electronic submissions are acceptable provided they are followed by a hard copy of the title/signature page with original signature(s) by January 6, 2003. If hard copy is submitted, please include a digital version on a disk. Also, please include the name, mail address, and phone number of the Federal administrative contact that would be used for administrative matters if the proposal is selected and funded. Finally, letters of support and similar materials that are sent separately from the proposal should include the title of the proposal and other relevant information so that the letter(s) can be matched with the proper proposal. Please email electronic proposals, in Microsoft Word or a compatible processor, to Bob_Clark@nifc.blm.gov.

Finally, the Governing Board hosts annual workshops for Principal Investigators (PIs) of active projects. Proposals submitted in response to this AFP should identify travel and related funding for one PI to participate in the annual workshop.

B. Areas of Interest for Proposals

Technology transfer has been, and continues to be, an integral part of each AFP and Task Statement issued by the JFSP. The intent of this technology transfer AFP is to ensure that the information resulting from investigations is synthesized into integrated tools or decision support systems, disseminated in forms that are readily usable by the target audience, and made readily available to a broad suite of potential users, including the specific audience for which the work was done. The JFSP and other fire science programs are producing a large amount of new information that will be valuable to land managers and resource management specialists alike; it is critical that this information be available in forms that these managers and the policy community can use.

Task 1: *Develop information structures, tools, or decision support systems for accessing, disseminating, and applying wildland fire and fuels research results from Joint Fire Science Program funded investigations and other relevant sources. The information should be presented in a regional, national, or thematic context appropriate to and readily accessible by the target audience and clearly describe when, where, and at what scale the information is and is not applicable. Proposals shall support the needs of fire and fuel managers and other users for addressing wildland fire management planning and implementation activities. Proposals should contain a concise review of similar tools already available. Benefits of the project to the user community must be clearly identified.*

There is a tremendous need for user-friendly, national scale tools and modeling systems that can be used by managers, policy-makers, scientists, and the public to provide better information and to improve the scientific foundation for decision-making. Some of these tools, such as the Fire Effects Information System, information available through Wildland Fire Assessment System, fire weather and smoke modeling systems, erosion prediction systems, WUI risk assessment systems, bibliographic retrieval systems, and other web-based information systems already exist in some form but may need to be updated or improved. Other tools may have been developed locally or could be made more accessible through improved user interfaces or other developments. Proposals should address relationships with other related tools and models that are being developed and plans for coordination and inter-compatibility. For example, there is critical need for a tool or tools that would help agencies to strategically locate fuels treatment sites to optimize multiple demands (WUI protection, wildfire risk, watershed protection, cost-effectiveness, etc.)

Proposals and included budgets should clearly distinguish between a developmental stage (one year) and an extended period for delivery. It is anticipated that successful proposals will be initially funded through the developmental stage and once an acceptable information structure or tool is presented to the Governing Board, funding for the extended delivery period may be considered.

Task 2: *Produce readily understandable and useable information synthesis or transfer products on key topics of critical interest to the fire and fuels management community. Proposals should clearly identify specific products that will support needs of fire and fuel managers and other users for addressing wildland fire management planning and implementation activities. The Governing Board envisions products that can be developed within short time periods and address immediate needs.*

Wildland fire managers are faced with evolving situations that demand increasingly intensive planning and implementation. There is a critical need for information synthesis and technology transfer products to provide readily understandable and useable information for immediate use. These products need to translate specific research result information into a form that is clearly applicable for management applications. Examples of products include, but are not limited to, synthesis papers, improvement or expansion of information available in existing electronic systems, workshops that stress field sessions, and experiential learning situations.

This area of technology transfer needs to extend beyond current and past efforts. Proposals must take information and technology transfer to a higher level and must incorporate multi-disciplinary components for meeting management needs in a complex environment. There is a range of methods to accomplish this objective and innovative and creative approaches are sought. Products shall be readily understandable by the target audience and have immediate applications.

C. Format for Proposals

Overview of the Proposal Format

The full proposal should specify rationale, objectives, methodologies, and deliverables in sufficient detail to allow an informed peer to assess the proposal's validity in addressing one or more task statements in the AFP. The proposal should also identify criteria by which success of the project can be determined. The proposal text and accompanying tables and figures, exclusive of curricula vitae or other appended information, should be limited to 12 pages. Please use at least 11 point font. Complete annual and total budgets and a firm timeline for deliverables must be included, as well as a mechanism for technology transfer to appropriate end users. The proposal also provides a record of management responsibility and accountability for various aspects of the project.

Title Page

The following format shall be used for the title page (not to exceed 1 page):

Project Title:
Principal Investigator(s):
Affiliation:
Address:
Telephone/Facsimile Number(s):
E-mail:
Duration of Project:
Annual Funding Requested from the Joint Fire Science Program: \$ _____
Total Funding Requested from the Joint Fire Science Program: \$ _____
Total value of In-kind and Financial Contributions: \$ _____
Abstract: Summarize the proposed project in a brief abstract not to exceed 1/2 page. The abstract should include the justification for the proposed project in relation to the task statement in the Request for Proposals, objectives, appropriate methodology, and applicability of results.

Electronic submissions are acceptable provided they are followed by a hard copy of the title/signature page with original signature(s) by January 6, 2003. If hard copy is submitted, please include a digital version on a disk or CD in Word or a compatible word processing system. If hard copy is provided only one copy is necessary.

Introduction

An introductory section should include:

- 1) Project Justification. A summary of the issue(s), why the project needs to be done (relevance to task statement in the Request for Proposals), and benefits derived.
- 2) Project Objectives. A statement of the project objective(s) must be clearly stated and measurable. This should include a brief statement of what information or products will be provided at the end of the project and how the information or product can be used to further understanding of wildland fire and/or fuels issues.
- 3) Background. This section includes a concise review and synthesis of existing knowledge and previous research or other pertinent background.

The introductory section is intended to provide peer reviewers and the Governing Board with evidence that the proposed work is applicable to the task statement in the Request for Proposals. Although the literature may be extensive, the synthesis should generally include reference to no more than about 15-20 of the most important and/or most relevant sources.

Materials and Methods

This section should describe procedures proposed for conducting the project in sufficient detail that a knowledgeable reviewer could understand the process and that a peer could replicate the project. A brief description of the study site(s) (as applicable) should be included.

Project Duration

Proposals will generally not be funded for longer than three years from date of selection and award, although requests for extensions or additional work may be considered.

Budget

The proposed budget should be provided in sufficient detail to identify indirect costs and related surcharges, to separate labor costs from operational costs, and to identify salaries associated with funded scientists or other funded full-time employees. Annual costs should be provided. Separate line items for "capitalized" equipment should be included. Outyear projections should be included for multi-year proposals. Proposed budgets should include travel expenses for at least one Principal Investigator (PI) to participate in an annual 3-day PI workshop or to develop a poster for presentation at the workshop.

Deliverables

Provide specific details on the information or product(s) that would be provided by the proposed project, and realistic timetables for delivery dates. It is expected that reports and other written materials will include an electronic version suitable for distribution, posting, etc. Descriptions in English units, with metric equivalents in parenthesis, are required. Annual progress reports are required.

Technology Transfer

It is imperative that information and site access be available to managers, officials, and other interested parties. Therefore, each proposal should include a description of how relevant information and site access would be made available. Posting of current information on an appropriate Internet site is required.

Qualifications of Investigators

It is anticipated that demonstration sites would be developed by land owners/managers and technical specialists in cooperation with scientists and appropriate officials. Please include a statement of qualifications for the principle specialists and scientists, and a statement of commitment by the appropriate land owners/managers to support and protect the demonstration site.

Checklist for Proposal Submissions

Does the proposal:

- * include an introduction or background section that includes the specific objectives of the project and describes how the proposed work is relevant to one the task statement in the AFP?
- * include a list of cooperators and their proposed contribution, including the original signature of the PI and an authorized signature from a cooperating federal unit (See Proposal Format, Title Page)?
- * include a relevant Curriculum Vitae or other description of credentials of the PI and co-investigator(s) that are signatories which demonstrates ability to complete the proposed work?
- * include a brief review and synthesis of related past and current literature and work?
- * Describe plans to integrate or collaborate with related ongoing or past efforts or products?
- * include an adequate description of the specific location of the proposed work?
- * include a description of the materials and methods of the proposed work including (as appropriate) experimental design and statistical analysis(es)?
- * include a detailed annual and total budget, including identification of salaries and indirect costs?
- * include a "Justification of Need for Salary Support," approved by appropriate authority, if needed? (See Salary Policy Section)
- * include a description and cost of equipment, which needs to be purchased to support the work?
- * include a list of deliverables with proposed dates of delivery?
- * include a technology transfer mechanism?
- * include signature as participant, letters, or other indications of support and commitment to collaborate from involved federal agency participants and other potential beneficiaries?

D. Review and Evaluation of Proposals

The following factors will be considered in reviews and evaluations of proposals to the Joint Fire Science Program:

1. How well does the proposal address one or more specific task statements identified in the AFP?
2. How well does the proposed work build on or interface with past or ongoing studies or products on related topics.
2. Does the proposal follow the requested format and include all the requested information?
3. Will the proposed work provide information or products that are useful across agency jurisdictions, fuel types, and geographic areas?
4. Does the proposal provide for adequate transfer of information or products, consider general availability and usefulness of proposed technology, and, as appropriate, provide for a feedback mechanism to the study team for product testing and improvement?
5. Does the proposal provide for adequate collaboration among agencies, between fire and land management personnel and research scientists or other collaborators, and between disciplines to ensure broad integration of existing knowledge and approaches as well as applicability of results and recommendations?
6. Are study approaches or design and statistical analysis(es) appropriate and adequate to meet stated objectives?
7. What are the qualifications of the team to do the proposed work? Are adequate institutional resources and support available?
8. Are proposed timeframes and budget reasonable and adequately justified, including budgets for proposed sub-agreements?
9. If formal cooperative arrangements are proposed (e.g., with universities or other non-federal organizations), is there documentation that these will be feasible and agreeable to the cooperators?
10. If the project will require compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act, Threatened/Endangered Species Act, or similar statutes, does the proposal contain evidence that these requirements are or will be possible within the proposed project timeframes?

E. Indirect Costs and Salary Policy

Indirect Costs

The Governing Board recognizes the need of participating organizations to recover reasonable indirect costs. Indirect costs up to 15 percent (for the unit performing the work) may be included in proposals without detailed justifications, however, any indirect costs exceeding 15 percent must be justified. Similarly, indirect costs in excess of 10 percent on pass-through arrangements from federal units to cooperating federal or non-federal units must be justified. The Governing Board reserves the right to negotiate budget amounts and deliverables (including indirect costs over 15 percent) with proposing organizations.

Salary Policy

Normally, salaries of permanent full-time federal employees are expected to be provided by their agencies. This is also true of university faculty on 12-month tenure-track appointments. These employees are already fully funded by their institutions. However, the Governing Board recognizes that there can be mitigating circumstances arising from the need to fill in behind these employees when they are reassigned to JFSP funded activities, or due to policies of individual organizations. In such cases, the Governing Board may agree to fund salaries of permanent employees. A brief justification must be included in the proposal, and the justification must be certified by an appropriate institutional authority, other than the Principal Investigator or other cooperator on the proposal, at the employee's organization or institution. The format provided below should be used for the certification. In addition, permanent employee salary costs must be explicitly identified in the project budget. The Governing Board requires no special justification (other than a brief description of the need for the position in the budget justification section of the proposal) for funding temporary or term employees, post-doctoral employees, or graduate or undergraduate students.

Certification to the Joint Fire Science Program Justification of Need for Salary Support

I hereby certify the attached Justification of Need to provide temporary salaries for full-time permanent employee (s) _____ (*list name of employee(s)*) is necessary and appropriate to enable him/her (them) to fully and directly participate in the proposed project.

I understand that salary funding for this/these employee(s) directly involved in the proposed project is temporary and will not be provided beyond the duration of the proposed project.

Signature _____

Date _____

Title _____