

Please Note: For this round only of the NFF's Matching Awards Program, the NFF has decided to broaden the scope of the program to now also include projects that address at least one of the Chief of the Forest Service Dale Bosworth's four major threats: fires and fuels, unmanaged recreation, invasive species and loss of open space. Please see the descriptions below and please note that this is a one-time only addition and that the NFF's usual programmatic conservation issues – community-based forestry, watershed health and restoration, wildlife habitat and recreation – remain focus areas of the program. Please note that the NFF will not focus its efforts in certain priority geographic areas as part of this “one-time-only” change.

Also, the deadline for pre-proposals has been changed to **Friday, August 26, 2005**.

NATIONAL FOREST FOUNDATION CENTENNIAL YEAR MATCHING AWARDS PROGRAM

2005 GUIDELINES FOR PROPOSALS

The National Forest Foundation, a private, nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization, chartered by Congress, engages America in community-based and national programs that promote the health and public enjoyment of the 192 million acre National Forest System, and administers private gifts of funds and land for the benefit of the National Forests. The NFF believes that communities should play a significant role in determining the future of National Forests and Grasslands. By matching federal funds (provided under a cooperative agreement with the Forest Service) to non-federal dollars, the NFF's Matching Awards Program (MAP) is able to effectively double the resources available to nonprofit partners to implement projects that directly benefit our National Forests and Grasslands.

A common thread connecting all of NFF's program areas is an interest in hands-on projects that enhance the viability of natural resources while considering benefits to, and the involvement of, surrounding communities.

In 2005, the NFF will expand its programmatic focus to include the four natural resource issues the USDA Forest Service Chief identified as key threats to the National Forest System nationwide: fire and fuels, invasive species, unmanaged recreation, and loss of open space. The NFF will accept applications from non-governmental, nonprofit organizations working on or adjacent to National Forests and Grasslands to address these threats in a collaborative way. A complete transcript of the 2003 speech in which Chief Bosworth presented these issues is available via the NFF website.

All grants awarded by the NFF require a cash match through non-federal donations. Donations must be sent to the NFF for at least a 1:1 match ratio. In-kind contributions may be noted to show leverage for a project, but cannot be matched by NFF funds. No NFF funds may be returned to the USDA Forest Service or any other federal entity. Projects must be completed within a year from project award date, and final project reports must be received before new funds may be disbursed under another grant.

Each pre-proposal submitted to the special 2005 NFF MAP must address at least one of the eight programmatic areas outlined below:

NFF's 2005 Program Areas:

Community-based Forestry:

The NFF believes that communities can work to improve natural resources, while providing local economic and social benefits. The aim of community-based forestry is to empower those who work, live and recreate in the woods to work together and strive towards a common set of goals.

The NFF will make strategic investments in community-based forestry projects, particularly those that focus on forest health and restoration. Projects should address the need for greater collaboration in community-based forestry projects. Local constituencies should be included in the decision-making process through ecological restoration activities and action-oriented training, conservation and restoration projects that support economically sustainable natural resource use, and address wildfire risk reduction and response through project activities such as:

- Citizen-based monitoring and/or fuels reduction efforts, especially in the wildland/urban interface;
- Collaboratively developed and implemented fuel reduction projects;
- Fire recovery efforts, involving re-seeding, erosion control, and/or riparian restoration.

Watershed Health & Restoration:

National Forest lands are the largest single source of fresh water in the United States. The water sources that begin on National Forest lands bring life to agricultural lands and clean water to communities, and are conservatively estimated to be worth at least \$3.7 billion per year. Protecting these watersheds is one of the primary reasons the USDA Forest Service was established, and maintaining and restoring these watersheds is of vital importance. The patchwork of federal and non-federal lands in many watersheds makes public-private partnerships even more crucial to ensuring clean water and vibrant ecosystems.

The NFF will support watershed restoration and enhancement projects, especially those initiatives that include diverse perspectives and address critical issues such as non-point source pollution and fish habitat enhancement through project activities such as:

- Sediment reduction through slope stabilization and contouring;
- Planting of native species in damaged riparian areas;
- Removal of invasive exotic species.

Wildlife Habitat Improvement:

The diverse habitats found within the National Forests and Grasslands support more than 3,000 species of birds, mammals, reptiles, fish, and amphibians. For many Americans, engaging in wildlife viewing, fishing, and hunting within these habitats often serves as the primary means of connection to the outdoors, and provides important revenue for state and local economies.

The continuing growth of population centers in the western and southern United States has had a negative impact on the overall habitat of many species. The NFF is working to safeguard these threatened species and the forest lands on which they depend for survival. The NFF will make strategic investments in projects that improve conditions for maintaining viable populations of native plants and animals, while meeting public demand for wildlife viewing and appreciation, hunting and fishing, through collaborative project activities such as:

- Juniper removal to restore sagebrush ecosystems and improve quail habitat;
- Treatments for noxious weeds and plant succession to protect crucial habitat for rare species;
- Culvert replacement to improve fish passage

Recreation Opportunities Enhancement:

Recreation is the fastest growing use of National Forests and Grasslands. The increase in visitor usage and encroaching development, results in increased human impacts to ecosystems. Maintaining the integrity of these forest and grassland resources is vital for both ecosystem viability and quality recreational experiences. Through support of local restoration activities and citizen involvement, the NFF can help to ameliorate these pressures and ease their effects on and adjacent to public lands, while still providing economic benefits to the surrounding communities.

The NFF is interested in collaborative projects that address the rising demand for outdoor recreation in National Forests and Grasslands through project activities such as:

- Creation of a network of recreational birding and nature sites, using existing roads and trails;
- Restoration of impacts of excessive or inappropriate use in sensitive areas;
- Improvement of recreational resources through trail restoration and maintenance.

Fire and Fuels:

Years of fire suppression, overstocked stands and drought have led to the severe fires of recent years on and around our public lands, destroying thousands of acres of forest, water reservoirs and wildlife habitat, and in many cases, gutting nearby homes. Results of these wildfires include soil erosion, landslides, water pollution, habitat destruction, suppression of natural fire regimes, threats to community safety and loss of natural and economic resources.

The NFF will make strategic investments in community-based forestry projects that work to mitigate the impact of devastating wildfire, as well as reduce the likelihood of further fire risk through fuels reduction and monitoring. Local constituencies should be included in the decision-making process through ecological restoration activities and action-oriented training, conservation and restoration projects that address wildfire risk reduction and response through project activities such as:

- Citizen-based monitoring and/or fuels reduction efforts, especially in the wildland/urban interface;
- Collaboratively developed and implemented fuel reduction projects;
- Collaborative efforts that focus on finding uses for fuel reduction material that will ultimately reduce the costs of projects;
- Fire recovery efforts, involving re-seeding, erosion control, and/or riparian restoration.

Invasive Species:

Invasive species, including both noxious weeds and non-native forest and rangeland pests, spread quickly and largely unchecked through new environments, displacing native species through competition, predation and parasitism. The ecological effects of various invasives are devastating, and include native tree and plant mortality, loss of native animal habitat and decline of native species.

The NFF will make strategic investments in collaborative projects that address the damaging spread of invasive species on and around National Forests and Grasslands nationwide through project activities such as:

- Removal and control of noxious weeds;
- Citizen-based monitoring and GIS-mapping in areas of high infestation;
- Watershed health improvement through re-seeding of riparian areas with native species;
- Cultivation of native species for restoration use.

Unmanaged Recreational Use:

Recreation is the fastest growing use of National Forests and Grasslands. The increase in visitor usage and encroaching development results in increased human impacts to ecosystems. Maintaining the integrity of these forest and grassland resources is vital for both ecosystem viability and quality recreational experiences. Through support of local restoration activities and citizen involvement, the NFF can help to manage recreation pressures and ease their effects on and adjacent to public lands, while providing economic benefits to the surrounding communities.

The NFF is interested in collaborative projects that address the rising demand for outdoor recreation in National Forests and Grasslands through projects activities such as:

- Collaborative efforts aimed at establishing shared agreements for motorized (OHV) and non-motorized users;
- Restoration of impacts of excessive or inappropriate use in sensitive areas;
- GIS mapping of user created trails and/or roads;
- Citizen-based monitoring of designated and closed areas.

Loss of Open Space:

A significant increase in development pressures, residential sprawl and subdivision has broken larger forest ecosystems into smaller, more isolated patches in several places across the U.S., posing serious threats to wildlife corridors, more structures in the wildland/urban interface, and a marked decrease in forested and open range land.

The NFF is interested in collaborative projects that will address the loss of open space through project activities such as:

- Creation of buffer zones through planting of native species and/or re-routing of present routes;
- Local landowner education and assistance to implement voluntary conservation activities on private lands adjacent to national forests and grasslands;
- Protection of private inholdings in national forests or grasslands through donation or gifts of easements.*

*The NFF cannot provide funding for land acquisition or purchase

Who Can Apply:

Applications will be accepted from non-federal partners, community-based organizations, Native American tribes, educational institutions, and other nonprofit 501(c)(3) organizations. Applications cannot be accepted from federal, state or county agencies.

Selection Criteria:

Successful projects will:

1. Proactively address one of the NFF's eight program areas in 2005: community-based forestry, watershed health, recreation, habitat improvement; or the threat of fire/fuels, invasive species, unmanaged recreation, and/or loss of open space.
2. Improve the conditions of National Forests and Grasslands in a measurable, hands-on way and/or directly benefit National Forests and Grasslands. Projects can occur on or around Forest Service lands. No NFF funds may be directed back to the USDA Forest Service.
3. Have funding from non-federal contributions that equals the amount being requested from the NFF on at least a 1:1 basis. In-kind contributions and other federal funds may be noted in the total project budget to demonstrate additional leverage. A brief definition of types of funds is as follows:
 - Non-federal funds = dollars of non-federal origin for at least a 1:1 cash match with NFF funds
 - NFF funds = dollars awarded through NFF MAP, of federal origin, that must be matched with non-federal dollars before being released
 - In-kind contributions = Goods and services (such as volunteer labor, donated materials, and equipment) which are applied toward goals outlined in the project description but cannot be matched by NFF funds
 - Other federal funds = funds used to complete the project from other federal agencies which cannot be matched with NFF funds.
4. Have multiple benefits to the resource base and involvement of surrounding communities, and the demonstrable means by which to measure project success.
5. Have a hands-on learning component which can be shared with resource managers and local communities to improve awareness and appreciation of the issues addressed by the project.
6. Demonstrate a commitment to, and a detailed plan for, community involvement/participation in the development and implementation of the project.
7. Provide sufficient detail to enable the NFF and the Forest Service to evaluate the design, specific activities and anticipated results of the project, its methods for evaluation, qualifications of the project manager, and the ability of the organization to complete the project as described and within the anticipated timeframe.

The NFF MAP does not support projects that are seeking general operating support, administrative overhead, or cannot produce at least a 1:1 non-federal cash match.

Federal Matching Funds Requirements:

NFF funds awarded through this program can be disbursed only as a match to cash contributions from a non-federal source. These federal matching funds:

- Must be used for the purpose of completing conservation projects on or around National Forest System lands.
- Cannot be used for general administrative purposes.
- Cannot be used to directly support Forest Service salary or personnel. Neither NFF funds nor the non-federal match may be directed back to the Forest Service.

All non-federal matching funds and documentation of contributed goods and services must be sent directly to the NFF. Once the non-federal contributions have been received and documented by the NFF, the grant recipient must submit an invoice ("Cash Request Form") and non-federal documentation to the NFF in order for the NFF to release the non-federal cash and federal matching funds. Cash Requests are processed on or about the 1st and 15th of every month, and the turnaround time for release is about two weeks. The non-federal match can be submitted incrementally or in full beginning at the start of the project term.

Application Process:

Applicants must first submit a pre-application. Pre-proposals may be submitted through the mail or via the NFF's website ([www.natlforests.org/apply now](http://www.natlforests.org/apply_now)). Pre-proposals must include the pre-proposal cover sheet, a brief project summary (1-2 pages) containing objectives, methods, anticipated results, and a projected budget that indicates how NFF matching funds and non-federal funds will be used. Please type the project title and name of your organization at the top of each page. Pre-proposals should include:

- What the project will accomplish and demonstrable benefits the project would have to the National Forests or Grasslands and surrounding community. Please list specific, hands-on project objectives and a means to measure accomplishment.
- Relevance of proposed project to the NFF's 2005 special MAP priorities as outlined above.
- How you plan to gain community support, input and/or involvement.
- How the project will be monitored and evaluated.
- Organization's mission and a brief outline of past project accomplishments.
- A preliminary project budget, using both committed and anticipated non-federal funds. Please use the form on the last page.

Applicants will be notified via e-mail when the pre-proposal has been received and processed. The NFF will review the pre-proposals and contact selected candidates to submit full proposals within one month. Full proposals will require written support from the Forest Supervisor from the National Forest(s) or Grassland within which the project will take place and evidence of non-profit 501(c)(3) status.

Application Deadlines:

Pre-proposals due in the NFF offices: FRIDAY, AUGUST 26, 2005

Pre-proposal decisions and requests for full proposals will be made within 4 weeks.

Final selection decisions: DECEMBER 2005

Contacts:

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**Please mail the pre-application with the cover sheet to the address below or submit via the NFF website.
Please submit the text, preliminary budget and cover sheet together as one document.**

Centennial Year Matching Awards Program
National Forest Foundation
2715 M Street NW, Ste. 100
Washington, DC 20007

**NATIONAL FOREST FOUNDATION
2005 CENTENNIAL YEAR MATCHING AWARDS PROGRAM
PRE-PROPOSAL COVER SHEET**

Please do not attach a cover letter on top of the cover sheet

Date Received: _____

Project #: 5CY - _____ 25
(Do not write above this line)

ORGANIZATION INFORMATION:

Organization: _____

Street: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone Number: _____ Fax Number: _____

Web Address: _____

PROJECT INFORMATION:

Project Title: _____

Two Sentence Project Summary:

Location of Project (State, **National Forest(s)**, District, Site):

Commencement Date: _____ Completion Date: _____ (No later than 12/06)

Project Contact: _____

Phone: _____ Email address: _____

FUNDS:

National Forest Foundation funds requested: \$ _____

Anticipated Non-Federal Donor Funds:

Donor: _____ Amount: \$ _____

_____ \$ _____

_____ \$ _____

_____ \$ _____

Mail with attachments to: National Forest Foundation, 2715 M Street, NW, Suite 100, Washington, DC 20007 by August 29, 2005.