Announcement for Proposals, 2004-3
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, 2003

Closes December 15, 2003

NOTE TO POTENTIAL PROPOSERS: There are significant changes in requirements for proposals. Please read the AFP carefully.

This Announcement for Proposals includes one Task Statement on ABest Management Practices@

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, 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 recent wildland fires, 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 continue to escalate.

The Congress, agency administrators, JFSP partners, research scientists, 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 include 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:jfsp.nifc.gov. In addition, the JFSP issued AFPs in June 1998, February 1999, February 2000, February 2001, and October 2003 and subsequently selected and funded more than

220 projects. Previous AFPs and lists of funded projects can also be found on the JFSP web page. This AFP contains one Task Statement for which proposals are sought. The JFSP 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 direct involvement by Federal scientists or land managers in the development of proposals must be included in all proposals**. Proposals that do not have evidence of direct involvement by federal land managers and/or scientists will not be considered for funding.** Examples of documented involvement by land managers or scientists include participation as a Principal Investigator, cooperator, or collaborator; letters of commitment and support; and written evidence from the manager that the proposal is responding to an urgent fire or fuels issue involving or pertaining to the land manager-s unit.

All proposals must include the following items to be considered. The JFSP program office must receive the complete proposal package (including all items in the checklist below) by close of business (5:00 pm MST) December 15, 2003. There will be no exceptions to this closing date; incomplete proposals will not be considered.

Facsimile or e-mailed proposals will no longer be accepted.

1) One original and five copies of complete proposal packet including all material.

2) An electronic version on a diskette or compact disk (in Word or WordPerfect format) must be included.

3) Signature of a principal investigator (PI), (this person will be the technical contact for the JFSP office), Federal cooperator or land manager (if different than the PI) as appropriate (see definitions of Federal cooperator and land manager), and a concurrence signature of the appropriate Federal Administrative or Contracting Officer.

4) Complete address including phone number, mailing address, surface mail address (if different than mail address) and e-mail address of principal investigator, Federal cooperator or land manager as appropriate, and appropriate Federal Administrative or Contracting Officer.

5) Letters of support are not required but are considered in the review process. However, all letters of support that are submitted must be included with the hard copy proposal package by the due date. Each letter must clearly state the title of the project and the principal investigator of the proposed work.

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
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Proposed project budgets can be complex, often involving multiple agencies or units in association with non-Federal units. Proposers should ensure that appropriate Federal Administrative Officers, Contracting Officers, or Grants and Agreements Specialists, as well as budget or grants and contract offices of non-federal cooperators, review the proposal prior to submission to ensure that the budget and other fiscal aspects of the proposal meet agency requirements. The appropriate AO/CO/Grants and Agreements Specialist concurrence signature from the lead agency is required as identified in number 3 above.

B. Area of Interest for Proposals

This AFP contains one Task Statement:

Task 1: ***Pre-proposals are sought for projects to identify and describe Best Management Practices (BMPs) (see Definitions, section F) for fuels treatment methods specific to one or more major vegetation types to assist hazardous fuels treatment project design, implementation, analysis and review. Following evaluation and review of pre-proposals submitted in response to this AFP, the JFSP intends to request expanded proposals from selected submitters prior to final evaluation and selection for funding.***

This task is in response to the Ten-year Implementation Plan of the Comprehensive Strategy for the National Fire Plan which calls for the development of BMPs specific to different ecosystems to facilitate expedited review under NEPA, ESA, Clean Air Act and National Historic Preservation Act.

Pre-proposals should include all of the information required by this AFP. However, the text of the proposal should not exceed eight pages.

The proposed deliverables should build on existing information on fire regime classification, autecological effects of fire, fire regime characteristics and post-fire plant community developments in ecosystems contained in existing publications, such as Wildland Fire in Ecosystems: Effects of Fire on Flora. (Brown, James K., and Jane Kapler Smith (eds). 2000. Gen.Tech. Rep. RMRS-GTR-42-vol. 2). Proposals are requested to develop BMPs for one of the following major vegetation types (as classified in Brown and Kapler Smith) where the majority of National Fire Plan fuel treatments are planned for near future.

Ecosystems for which pre-proposals are sought:

Western Forest Ecosystems

- Ponderosa Pine
- Ponderosa Pine/Jeffrey Pine and Ponderosa Pine-Mixed Conifer
- Interior Douglas-fir, Larch
- Rocky Mountain Lodgepole Pine

Western Shrubland, Woodland and Grassland Ecosystems

- Chaparral **B** Mountain Shrub
- Southwestern Ponderosa Pine
- Pinyon-Juniper
- Sagebrush

Eastern Ecosystems

- Loblolly Pine
- Mixed Mesophytic Forest

Northern Ecosystems

- Black Spruce/Jack Pine/Red Pine

Tropical and Sub-tropical Ecosystems

- Pine Flatwoods and Pine Rocklands

The deliverables should be designed to aid the development of operational management projects. Products should assist land managers in their efforts to plan and evaluate fuels treatment projects and support them in the selection of appropriate fuels treatment methods, fire use, and associated practices at stand to landscape scales.

The JFSP Governing Board intends that projects funded under this task will be coordinated with each other to ensure consistency and compatibility, and to enhance their usefulness in planning and decision-making. The final outputs are envisioned as a series of synthesis products that will provide a description and analysis of current knowledge and decision support tools, discuss implications of alternative management strategies, and make recommendations of management practices appropriate to achieving a variety of outcomes. The techniques utilized will vary depending on the information and literature currently available. Each project team must include at least one land manager familiar with program implementation issues and challenges of hazardous fuels projects in the subject vegetation type.

Topics addressed should, at a minimum, include treatment methods including mechanical, biological, fire, and chemical treatments at the local to landscape scale; economics; markets and non-market conditions; product value; and other considerations for conducting fuels treatments in an ecosystem context. Best Management Practices should be differentiated relative to the values to be protected including Wildland Urban Interface; Threatened, Endangered and Sensitive habitat;

watersheds; air quality; and the Wildland/Urban Interface.

One or two proposers from each selected project will be required to participate in a kickoff workshop to discuss goals, identify common standards and format for deliverables, develop a timeline for work, and develop an overall study plan and final budget proposal for accomplishing the work of the teams. The workshop costs will be borne by the Joint Fire Science Program. A Steering Committee comprised of one PI from each selected project team and a representative of the Joint Fire Science Program will oversee the implementation of the plan of work. Proposers will be given an opportunity to make minor adjustments their proposed budget as the study plan is developed. These proposed final budgets will be reviewed by JFSP and approved after negotiating any necessary revisions.

Projects will be funded for a maximum of 18 months from the award date. The technology transfer plan must clearly describe methods for rapid dissemination of results to managers and practitioners. Contingent on the availability of funding, the Board may reissue this AFP on an annual basis until the major vegetation types have been addressed.

Best Management Practices syntheses will be subjected to a peer review process prior to completion. This process will be conducted by the JFSP Program Office.

C. Format for Proposals

Overview of the Proposal Format

The pre-proposal should specify rationale, objectives, methodologies, and deliverables in sufficient detail to allow an informed reader to assess the proposal's validity in addressing the Task Statement in this AFP. The pre-proposal text and accompanying tables and figures, exclusive of curricula vitae or other appended information, should be limited to eight pages. Please use at least 11-point font. Annual and total (18 month) budgets and a 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 should be used for the title page (not to exceed 1 page):

Project Title:

Announcement for Proposals this proposal is responding to:

Principal Investigator(s):

Affiliation:

Address:

Telephone/Facsimile Number(s):

E-mail:

Federal Cooperator (please include full mail and e-mail addresses as well as phone number:

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 **2** page. The abstract should include the justification for the proposed project in relation to one or more task statements in the AFP, objectives, appropriate methodology, and applicability of results.

Signature of PI _____ Date:

Signature of Federal Cooperator: _____ Date:

Concurrence of Federal Cooperator fiscal representative:_____ Date:

Introduction

An introductory section should include:

1) Project Justification. A brief summary describing why this project needs to be completed in this ecosystem and benefits derived.

2) Project Objectives. A statement of the project objective(s) must be clearly stated. This should include a brief statement of the information or product(s) that will be provided at the end of the project, and how the information or product can be used to resolve the issue(s) stated in the task statement.

3) Background. This section includes a concise review and synthesis of existing knowledge and previous research or other pertinent background information, a description of how the proposed project adds to or improves existing knowledge or tools, and a description of coordination with other relevant ongoing or completed products to ensure cross-compatibility and eliminate redundancy.

The introductory section is intended to provide peer reviewers and the Governing Board with evidence that the proposed work compliments previous and on-going work and that the work is applicable to Task Statement in the AFP. Although the literature may be extensive, the synthesis should generally include reference to no more than about 12-15 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.

Project Duration

The Governing Board anticipates that all projects funded from this AFP will be completed within 18 months.

Budget

The proposed budget should be provided in sufficient detail to identify direct and indirect costs and related surcharges, to separate labor costs from operational costs, and to identify salaries associated with funded scientists. Contributed costs and the source of those costs should be included in the budget, and annual and total costs should be provided. Separate line items for "capitalized" equipment (more than $5000) should be included. Outyear projections should be included for multi-year proposals. Proposed budgets should include travel expenses for one PI to participate in an annual 3-day PI workshop. The Governing Board of the Joint Fire Science Program reserves the right to negotiate budget amounts and deliverables with proposing organizations. The JFSP standard indirect rate is 20% for agencies/units/institutions conducting the work, and 10% administrative on funds passed through to collaborators. See section on Indirect Costs below.

Deliverables

Proposals must provide specific details on the information or product(s) that would be provided by the proposed work, and a realistic timetable for delivery. It is expected that all final products will include an electronic version suitable for distribution, posting, etc. Descriptions in English units, with metric equivalents in parenthesis, are required. Annual progress summaries are required.

Science Application and Delivery (formerly Atechnology transfer@)

It is imperative that deliverables reach end users. Therefore, each proposal should include a description of how the BMP syntheses would be distributed to the field.

Qualifications of Investigators

Include Curriculum Vitae for primary PI(s) and at least one Federal cooperator, land manager, or research collaborator. These should reflect recent, relevant experience and publication(s) and should not exceed 2 pages.

D. Review and Evaluation of Proposals

Facsimile or e-mailed proposals will no longer be accepted.

Checklist of items that must be included in Proposal Submissions

- One original and five copies of complete proposal packet including all material,
- An electronic version on a diskette or compact disk (in Word or WordPerfect format) must be submitted with the packet.
- Signatures of principal investigator (PI), (this person will be the technical contact for the JFSP office), the Federal cooperator or land manager (if different than the PI) as appropriate (see definitions of Federal cooperator and land manager), and signature of concurrence of the appropriate Federal Administrative or Contracting Officer.
- Complete address including phone number, mailing address, surface mail address (if different than mail address) and e-mail address of the principal investigator, Federal cooperator or land manager as appropriate, and Federal Administrative or Contracting Officer who would administer the fiscal aspects of the project.
- Letters of support are considered in the review process but are not required. However, letters of support that are submitted must be included with the proposal package. Letters must include the title and principal investigator of the project.
- An introduction or background section that includes the specific objectives of the project and describes how the proposed work is relevant to Task Statement in the AFP.
- A list of cooperators and their proposed contribution.

- A 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

- A brief review and synthesis of related past and current literature and work

- A first year and total budget, including identification of salaries and indirect costs.

- Include a AJustification of Need for Salary Support,@ approved by appropriate authority, as necessary.

- A list of deliverables with proposed dates of delivery

- A science delivery and application mechanism.

- Letters of support.

Review and evaluation:

Reviews and evaluations of proposals submitted in response to this AFP to the Joint Fire Science Program will focus on the following five factors:

- Relevancy
- Scientific Methods and Study Design
- Products and Delivery into Application
- Collaboration and Leverage
- Administrative Adequacy

Criteria associated with the factors include:

Relevancy:
1. Does the proposal address the Task Statement in the AFP?
2. How relevant is the proposed work to field level personnel?
3. Does the Project Justification adequately describe why the project needs to be done?
4. Is there evidence that land managers need the proposed work?
5. Does this proposal demonstrate new or significant contributions to existing knowledge bases?

Scientific Methods and Study Design:

1. Are study approaches appropriate and adequate to meet stated objectives?
2. What are the qualifications of the team to do the proposed work? Are adequate institutional resources and support available?
3. If the proposal involves software development, does it include beta-testing in the proposal and is there evidence that the proposal addressed agency system architecture and security requirements?

Products and Delivery into Application

1. Does the proposal provide for adequate transfer of information or products and consider general availability and usefulness of proposed technology?
2. Is the proposed work cost effective?
3. At what scale will the proposed work provide information or products? Are the products useful across agency jurisdictions, fuel types, and geographic areas?
4. Does the delivery method facilitate or enhance the utility of the scientific information for management application?
5. Does the delivery use an combination of passive and active science application and delivery methods?

Collaboration - Leverage:

1. How well does the proposed work build on or interface with past or ongoing studies or products on related topics?
2. 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?
3. Is there evidence of local or regional agency support and involvement in the proposal?

Administrative Adequacy:

1. Does the proposal follow the requested format and include all the requested information?
2. 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?
3. Does the proposal address compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act, Threatened/Endangered Species Act, or similar statues?
4. Are proposed timeframes and budget reasonable and adequately justified, including budgets for proposed sub-agreements?
5. Are the in-kind contributions reasonable/adequate with the proposed budget?
6. Is a justification for salaries included and adequate?

E. Indirect Costs and Salary Policy

Indirect Costs

The JFSP Governing Board recognizes the need of participating organizations to recover reasonable indirect costs. At the same time, the JFSP has limited authority to pay indirect costs, and cost is clearly a factor in the final proposal selection process. The JFSP maximum allowed indirect rates are 20 percent for that portion of the funding that is used by units/institutions conducting the work, and 10 percent administrative cost to the Federal cooperator for Apassing through@ funding to those cooperating units/institutions.

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 organizations or 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 Joint Fire Science Program 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 PI 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 proposed 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. Stipends are normally funded but tuition is not.

F. Definitions

Agency Administrator: The agency Administrator is the official responsible for administering policy on an area of public land who has full authority for making decisions and providing direction. Also known as "Agency Line Officer,@ ALine Officer,@ and ALand Manager.@ Examples include Park Superintendent, Forest Supervisor, District Manager, Refuge Manager, District Ranger, and Field Office Manager. Research line officers are not included for the purpose of this AFP.

Announcement for Proposals (or AFP): Joint Fire Science Program method of requesting proposals. AFPs include Task Statements for which proposals are sought, instructions for proposal submission, and related information.

Best Management Practices (BMPs): Proactive practical methods or practices used during land management activities, such as fuel treatments, to achieve goals related to water quality, air quality, silviculture, wildlife habitat, biological diversity, aesthetics, recreation, and similar factors.

Federal Administrative or Contracting Officer: The individual attached to the Federal proposer=s or Federal cooperator=s unit who will be responsible for the administrative and fiscal aspects of the proposed work. This individual is typically an Administrative Officer, Contracting Officer, or

Grants and Agreements Specialist.

Federal Cooperator: Representative of a Joint Fire Science Program partner agency.

Indirect Costs: Those costs that are not directly attributable to a specific research project. Examples include the cost of operations and maintenance such as janitorial, phone, and clerical services. The Joint Fire Science Program recognizes two types of indirect costs: Ain-house@ costs incurred by the agency, institution, or unit completing the research, and Apass-through@ costs associated with passing funds to another agency, institution, or unit for the purpose of completing research. Indirect costs are limited to 20 percent of that portion of the proposed budget attributable to the agency, university or unit that is completing the research. Pass-through administrative costs are limited to 10 percent of the funds that are forwarded to the agency, university, or unit that is completing the research. Equipment purchased ($5000 or more) to support the research project are excluded from indirect costs.

Joint Fire Science Program Governing Board: An appointed, 10-person board, representing the JFSP partners, that manages the JFSP. The Board drafts and posts Announcements for Proposals, selects proposals for funding, supervises the JFSP Manager and program office, and conducts related business.

Joint Fire Science Program PI Workshop: Annual workshop, typically in the Spring, in which PIs of JFSP-funded projects provide progress reports, discuss research-related issues, and conduct other business.

Land Manager: see Agency Administrator

Principal Investigator (or PI): The individual identified in a proposal who is primarily responsible for completing a research project. This person will be the main technical contact for the JFSP Office.

Problem Statement or Statement of Need: A brief statement, written and signed by the agency administrator, which clearly describes the need for the proposed work and how the proposed work would resolve the issue. The statement also includes the agency administrator=s commitment to supporting the proposed work. The problem statement is typically one page or less.

Science Delivery and Application (formerly Atechnology transfer"): The transfer of information, materials, models and other research deliverables to end users, along with adequate information to user or apply the deliverables. Examples of active methods include workshops, training sessions, guided field tours, conferences, meetings, and symposia. Examples of passive methods include published papers and websites. A combination of active and passive methods is preferred.

Task Statement: A specific area of interest, identified in an Announcement for Proposals, for which proposals are sought.

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.

Justification:

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_____

Name (type or print)

Title _____ Phone Number