

Urban & Community Forestry: Leading Edge Projects Grant Program

2012/2013

Request for Proposals



State of California
Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
(CAL FIRE)
Urban & Community Forestry Program



Grant program made Pursuant to 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:

Proposition 84, Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2006

Concept Proposals Due: September 19, 2012

Urban & Community Forestry: Leading Edge Projects Grant 2012-2013

IMPORTANT NOTE:

Please also see and refer to the *Urban & Community Forestry Grant Programs Procedural Guide for 2012/2013*. This document is available at:

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

or

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

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*) has set aside funds to provide grants to applicants that wish to create or implement a “Leading Edge” Urban Forestry and/or Urban Greening Project or Program. The funding level of each *CAL FIRE* Urban & Community Forestry grant program may be adjusted based on the applications received.

The *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 biofuel, clean energy, and high quality wood. Such efforts play a significant role in meeting the state's greenhouse gas emission reduction targets. We encourage citizen participation in the development and implementation of state and local agency and non-profit organization urban forestry programs and projects.

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 a “Leading Edge” program or project that will help improve greening in urban areas or arrest the decline of urban forest resources, address climate change mitigation or adaptation, facilitate the planting of trees in cities, improve the quality of the environment in urban areas through establishment of, and/or improved management of urban vegetation to optimize benefits to urban areas. These projects should be unique and forward-thinking.

Practices that can be funded (including but not limited to):

- Preparing and implementing community-supported urban forest ordinances.
- Establishing urban forestry education centers to restore abandoned urban land and to develop community awareness of the benefits of managing California's urban forests.
- Designing and implementing demonstration projects that give special attention to energy conservation, air quality improvement, storm water management/water quality, or wood and fiber utilization projects.
- Other non-traditional Urban Forestry and/or Urban Greening Projects. Examples are: green roofs, regional urban forest planning efforts, bio-remediation projects, edible landscaping, and new technologies that may benefit urban greening efforts.
- Application of the Urban Forest Project Reporting Protocol approved by the California Climate Action Registry and the Air Resources Board.
- Projects that stimulate urban forestry or urban greening job creation.
- Projects that help the state meet its climate change adaptation strategies. See: <http://www.climatechange.ca.gov/adaptation/>.
- If your project somehow advances urban forestry, urban greening, or the management of urban natural resources, it may be eligible.

Tree planting projects, Tree Inventories, Management Plans and Education programs are not the primary focus of this grant. Please refer to our other grants that specifically address those areas.

Conditions:

All of the following conditions must be met for a proposed "Leading Edge" project to be eligible for a grant:

- Grant requests must be for the creation and development of an Urban Forestry, Community Forestry, or Urban Greening project or program that showcases the benefits of sustainable urban forests.
- Amount requested must be between \$30,000 and \$150,000. For projects under \$30,000, please see *CAL FIRE's* "Leafing Out" grant program.
- 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 project has a commitment for active participation from one or more of the following: local residents, local business, local nonprofit group or local government.
- 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).
- The applicant demonstrates a strong commitment to development and continuing support, both in policy and financially, of the program being developed.

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 **60% of total project cost**. Matching contributions (**40% of total project cost**) required as a condition of grants made pursuant to this section may be made in the form of material, services, or equipment, as well as funds from any non-state source. For example:

Total Project = \$210,000.00
CAL FIRE Maximum = \$150,000.00
Minimum match required = \$60,000.00

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.

For projects that include an Urban or Community Forestry Education Program, no more than 15% of grant funds may be used towards each of these activities. Separate grants are available for these specific program areas. These activities as part of the overall project can be shown as project match dollars by the applicant.

Application:

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

<http://www.ufe.org/grantinfo.lasso> or
http://www.fire.ca.gov/resource_mgt/resource_mgt_urbanforestry.php

Concept proposals must be submitted electronically in the provided format by September 19, 2012. 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 ahead of 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 at least two weeks prior to the due date (see Procedural Guide APPENDIX E).

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 concept application 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. Also include the number of trees to be planted by program. Provide your proposed budget following the format provided in the concept proposal form.

Desirable Concept Proposal Attributes

- The project will advance the practice of urban forestry.
- The project will arrest the decline of the urban forest.
- The project will help the state to meet its goals under the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (AB 32).
- The project will focus on the multiple benefits of urban forestry and/or urban greening.
- The project will solve problems with green infrastructure that would otherwise have been solved using traditional methods.
- The project will help to advance the use of urban forest biomass for productive purposes.
- The project will be easily replicable elsewhere.
- The project is located in an area with an unemployment rate in the relevant census tract that exceeds the average unemployment rate for urban areas in California and provides jobs for currently unemployed persons. Documentation will be required for full proposal if successful in the concept proposal process.
- The project promotes an ecosystem management approach to urban forestry.
- The project will provide significant public health benefits.
- The project will reach a wide and highly diverse audience.
- The project will be in one of the following:
 - *Disadvantaged community*: means a community with a median household income less than 80% of the statewide average.
 - *Severely disadvantaged community*: means a community with a median household income less than 60% of the statewide average.

Project Rating Criteria:

Projects in this grant program will be rated referencing the same criteria as in the most applicable criteria form *CAL FIRE's* other Urban & Community Forestry Grant Programs. Additionally, any conditions, attributes, or requirements of this RFP may be utilized for rating purposes.

1. Best Practices

- Project implements the wise use and/or improved management of urban forest resources for multiple benefits.
- Project arrests the decline of the urban forest resource.
- Project facilitates the creation of permanent jobs in urban forestry.
- Project utilizes innovative vegetative solutions to problems including but not limited to: greenhouse gas emissions, public health impacts, urban heat islands, air quality, energy savings and stormwater management.

- Project implements long range regional planning for urban forest resources.
 - Project showcases social &/or public health benefits of urban forests.
 - Project implements use of urban forest resources in meeting the state's goals for climate change adaptation.
- 2. Program Priorities (Must meet one or more)**
- Interagency Cooperation and Integration (Collaboration)
 - Project is Proposed by a Severely Disadvantaged or Disadvantaged Community.
 - Project is Innovative and/or Unique
 - Project is ready to move forward immediately.
 - Organizational capacity to carry out the project.
 - Application quality (thoroughness, clarity, focus, accuracy).

Note: In addition to the above criteria, application completeness, degree of community need, project value and project reflection of Urban Forestry Act goals and values will be evaluated.

Project Timeline:

Projects Completed By	March 30, 2015
Projects Closed – No Reimbursement Possible After this date	June 1, 2015

Note: Please see Urban & Community Forestry Grant Programs Procedural Guide for 2012/2013 for reporting requirements for this grant program.

What happens after submitting an application?

(Please see APPENDIX F of the *Urban & Community Forestry Grant Programs Procedural Guide for 2012/2013* for a CAL FIRE Urban & Community Forestry Program Grant Process Flow Chart).

Application Review and Filing

Upon receipt of an application 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 Grant Programs Procedural Guide*. Such review may include an inspection of the project area, if applicable.

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

Notification of Application Status

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

(1) For those applications that have ranked high enough in the initial review, *CAL FIRE* shall notify the applicant and invite them to submit a full proposal for a grant for the project. Invitation for a full proposal is NOT a guarantee of funding. Once a full proposal 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 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 applications 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 full proposal if funds become available during the fiscal year. If no funds become available during the fiscal year, *CAL FIRE* shall notify the applicant of this and shall encourage him/her to apply for funds during the next period in which *CAL FIRE* requests proposals for urban & community forestry projects.

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 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.

If the Director finds that the decision to reject the application conforms to these guidelines and the 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.)

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