



NCRP REGIONAL FOREST AND FIRE CAPACITY REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

On February 13, 2020 the North Coast Resource Partnership (NCRP) announced a request for proposals from eligible North Coast entities to assist in the development of a Regional Priority Plan that will include a comprehensive and integrated set of strategies, actions and projects to support forest, watershed and community health and long-term resilience to wildfire. The deadline for submission of all proposals is March 13, 2020. More information can be found on the [NCRP Regional Forest and Fire Capacity Planning webpage](#). Following is a list of proposal types:

- [Tribal and County Forest Advisors – Request for Letters of Interest](#)
- [Forest Health and Fire Management Consultant Services – Request for Qualifications/Proposals](#)
- [Demonstration Projects and Processes - Request for Concept Proposals](#)

Applicants were requested to submit questions in writing by February 28 and responses to all written questions were posted to the NCRP website on March 3. Following are the questions received to date.

[Demonstration Projects and Processes - Request for Concept Proposals](#)

What types of projects are fundable for this solicitation?

Please see the RFP for a list of fundable activities including (but not limited to) innovations in vegetation management, evaluation of new equipment and practices, tool/template development, innovative programmatic approaches to regulation/permitting, policy enhancements, economic innovations and opportunities. Please note that all demonstration projects must meet criteria in the RFFC grant – they must be scalable, replicable, measurable, innovative and result in outcomes that will increase the scope and scale of multi-benefit forest management in the North Coast. The NCRP welcomes innovations that proposers feel will best meet the NCRP RFFC objectives. The NCRP staff team will work with the selected proposers to develop a detailed scope of work and list of work products. They may request amendments to the proposal to ensure that the project demonstrates innovative approaches and methods that are transferrable to other parts of the region.

What is an appropriate proposal amount for demonstration projects?

The NCRP expects to issue subgrant agreements for demonstration projects in two rounds of funding to ensure that project proponents have more than one opportunity to submit. The NCRP anticipates issuing several small and medium sized subcontracts to project sponsors, ranging from \$25,000-\$250,000. These projects are expected to be completed by July 2021 to ensure that the outcomes and lessons learned can be incorporated into the NCRP Regional Priority Plan. Project proposals that have budgets that are scalable should submit a project budget that describes which project tasks could be scaled. A scalable budget may make a project more

competitive. The NCRP staff team will work with the selected proposers to develop a detailed budget and may select all or part of a demonstration project proposal.

Some Fire Safe Councils in particular are relatively informal. Are they eligible to act as lead applicant?

Eligible applicants include Federally recognized Indian Tribes, California State Indian Tribe, public agencies, local or state agency/special districts, Resource Conservation Districts, non-profit organizations, public utilities, private businesses, consulting firms and other private entities with adequate insurance coverage (see insurance requirements in the proposal). An informal Fire Safe Council would need to be associated or fiscally sponsored by one of the above listed eligible entities to apply for these funds.

Many of the Demonstration Projects and Processes proposals may involve potential public/private partnerships. Are there any preferences for the kind of organizations that are eligible for the program? These could include special districts, non-profits, for profit corporations, community groups or sole proprietors.

Projects may benefit any entity, though project funding through contracts or sub-agreements can only go to entities listed as eligible applicants.

How much flexibility is there for the insurance requirements?

If the project does not involve travel or 'in the field' activities and/or the project sponsor does not have employees, insurance requirements may be altered at the discretion of Humboldt County Risk Management. Any deviation from the standard insurance requirements will be taken on a case-by-case basis. Please note that insurance certificates and original endorsements effecting the required coverage will be required prior to execution of a subgrantee agreement. In addition, the Comprehensive or Commercial General Liability Policy shall provide that the County, and its agents, officers, officials, employees and volunteers, are covered as additional insured for liability arising out of the operations performed by, or on behalf of, the subgrantee. It is recommended that all proposers review the insurance requirements included in the RFP with their insurance provider to determine if changes will need to be made and to identify any associated cost increases.

What is the anticipated reimbursement process for this grant?

Invoices and progress reports may be submitted on a quarterly basis per a schedule provided by the contractor. Payment typically occurs within 2 months of receipt of invoice.

Can we use our federally negotiated NICRA indirect rate (~23%), or is there a set maximum indirect rate for these proposals?

Federally negotiated NICRA indirect rates are acceptable for those Tribes and entities that have been approved for this rate. However, the total accumulated administrative costs may account for no more than twenty percent of the total block grant award. Subgrantees may have a range of admin rates, and when the NCRP compiles the entire suite of projects we will need to find a balance that ensures that the overall administrative expenditures do not exceed 20% of the total grant award.

Can multiple partners submit for portions of a single project, or do we need to have a primary submitting organization with the primary issuing subawards to partners?

Unless a project can be parsed into discrete projects, a primary applicant will be awarded a contract and may choose to issue sub-agreement/contracts to partners/consultants.

Can we get advanced payments?

Payment will customarily be made in arrears, however, on a case-by-case basis, advance payments may be requested. Advance payments must be supported by written justification and approved in writing by the County and shall be in a format approved by the County. Subgrantees receiving advanced funds must provide a fiscal report detailing how those funds have been expended on a quarterly basis and along with each subsequent request for an advance.

Are there any specific reimbursement issues in this grant that are distinct from other similar state funded grant programs?

No.

How long do you anticipate the period between invoicing the NCRP and the reimbursement for grantees?

Payment typically occurs within 2 months of receipt of invoice. Many factors contribute to the speed at which reimbursements are processed. Timely and complete submittals of invoices by the subgrantee can greatly reduce time between submittal and payment.

Also are funding matches required?

Funding matches are not required though the proposal will be scored in part by the following criterion: ‘proven ability to be creative in leveraging limited financial resources’.

We were excited to see the NCRP RFP released, but surprised by the quick due date. I figured that I would send a note requesting that NCRP consider extending the deadline.

The deadline for the first round of demonstration projects cannot be extended, however the NCRP expects to announce a second demonstration project request for proposals later this spring to ensure that project proponents have more than one opportunity to submit. The second demonstration project solicitation period will also be one month. All projects will need to be completed by July 30, 2021.

With regards to the July 2021 project completion requirement for the NCRP Demonstration Projects and Processes: will there any flexibility in this, given potential weather-dependent logistics restraints? A specific example would be where follow-up treatments, such as prescribed burn, in subsequent years following initial treatment are necessary for effectiveness.

The intent of the demonstration projects is to test concepts, methods, and innovative techniques to identify effective management practices for fuel load reduction and forest health. Demonstration projects will need to be completed by July 30, 2021 to ensure that the project outcomes and lessons learned can be integrated into the NCRP Regional Priority Plan prior to the overall grant period ends.

Would it be better for a local partner to apply instead of an out of state partner?

Please see the RFP for the list of criteria that the proposal will be evaluated with, including: “Local preference will be given to project sponsors from within the North Coast region: the most technically qualified proposals will be ranked most highly – all other things being equal, the local proposer will be selected”. Please note that all on-the-ground demonstration project activities must be conducted within the boundary of the NCRP region.

Forest Health and Fire Management Consultant Services – Request for Qualifications/Proposals

Would you like Letter of References pertaining to the submission of a proposal for NCRP consultant services sent directly to you, or attached to the proposal?

Please send all elements of a proposal as a packet, including letters of recommendation.

Is this proposal to be qualified for a consultant pool to support NCRP RFFC planning and implementation? If so, how much detail is expected regarding the services to be provided by consultants? Are you looking for a firm to lead the writing of the RPP, or to support NCRP staff to write the plan?

Yes, this is a request for proposals for consultants to assist the NCRP staff with RFFC planning and/or technical support for project proponents. The amount of detail should be adequate to provide the proposal reviewers with enough information to evaluate the proposals per the criteria listed in the RFP/RFQ (e.g., relevant experience, team, depth of experience, quality of work products). The NCRP is seeking consultants to work collaboratively with NCRP staff that are coordinating and leading the development of the RFFC regional priority plan. Selected consultants may be requested to develop draft sections of the plan, review and help to refine draft sections of the plan, perform research and analysis, and/or support NCRP project proponents and staff with technical advice. NCRP staff will work with selected consultants to develop mutually agreed upon detailed work plans.

If selected as part of a pool, what level of detail will WCW/NCRP provide to consultants regarding future technical needs? How do you envision that process working?

NCRP staff will work closely on a mutually agreeable scope of work with selected consultants. Many scope elements will be clearly defined at the outset, and some may be refined after the NCRP receives new data, project proposals, information and guidance from partners and the NCRP leadership and committees. The scope of work will be updated to reflect the evolution of the planning process based on new information.

Would you have several consultants qualified to provide various services, or only one selected consultant for one or more services?

We expect to retain multiple consultants depending on specialty area, given the diversity of planning and technical support elements needed.

Are you expecting a budget with the proposal, or rather a fee structure with hourly rates?

A fee structure with hourly rates is adequate for the evaluation of technical consultants.

What do you mean by “leveraging existing funding resources where applicable”? Are you expecting consultants to raise funds or provide match, or rather to suggest potential funding sources for prioritized projects?

Although not required, the NCRP is interested in knowing if consultants have capacity or background in raising funds, identifying match, and suggesting potential funding sources. Depending on the elements that you are interested in providing services for, this background could make your proposal and qualifications more competitive.

Are insurance certifications required with the RFP application, after acceptance as a potential consultant, or at the time a contract is written to provide services?

We do not need insurance certifications at the time of proposal submittal; however, we need acknowledgement that you understand the insurance requirements and that you will be able to meet the insurance terms prior to entering into a contract with the NCRP. Insurance certificates will need to be in place before the final contract can be executed.

Please define local preference. Several of our team members either live or work on the North Coast, or have for most or some of their careers. The principal applicant's main office however is currently outside of the North Coast (while still maintaining a residence there). Would this qualify as local?

Please see the criteria/definitions in the RFP/RFQ and provide detail regarding your unique situation as it relates to these criteria, including your interpretation of how your team's status meets the definition for local preference.

If our proposal already consists of an integrated team, is the contract maximum still \$50,000?

We expect to limit initial contract awards to \$50K, and may consider expanding awards in future, depending on performance, evolving program needs/priorities and new information. If you wish to provide a phased scope and budget that exceeds \$50,000, please do so.