



# 2019 USFS Wood Innovations Funding Opportunity

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Considerations for California and Hawaii Applications  
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# Outline

- Key Resources
- Grant Program Purpose & Requirements
- Changes from Previous USFS Wood Innovation Grant Cycles
- Project Examples, Wood Energy & Wood Products
- Anatomy of an Application
- Review Process and Timeline
- Evaluation Criteria and Preferences



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## Resources

- Wood Education & Resource Cntr (WERC) Website – <https://www.fs.usda.gov/naspf/programs/wood-education-and-resource-center/2019-wood-innovations-program-request-proposals>
- UC Berkeley Woody Biomass Website – <https://ucanr.edu/sites/WoodyBiomass/Grants/>
- National Association of State Foresters for California and Hawaii Forest Action Plans - <http://www.stateforesters.org/regional-state>



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### OTHER RESOURCES

- 1)
- 2)

The screenshot displays the U.S. Forest Service website for the Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry. The page is titled "2019 Wood Innovations Program Request for Proposals". The header includes the USDA logo and the text "U.S. FOREST SERVICE Caring for the land and serving people". The navigation menu includes "Home", "Topics", "Resources and Publications", "About", and "Working With Us". The sidebar on the left lists various resources under "What We Do", including "Wood Innovations", "Wood Products Markets", and "Woody Biomass". The main content area provides the following information:

**Overview Information**  
 Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number is 10.674  
 CFDA Title is Wood Utilization Assistance

**Important Dates:**

<b>October 24, 2018</b>	Issuance of Request for Proposals
<b>January 23, 2019</b>	Proposal submission deadline
<b>May 1, 2019</b>	Approximate date for the U.S. Forest Service to notify applicants of results
<b>August 1, 2019</b>	Approximate date of award

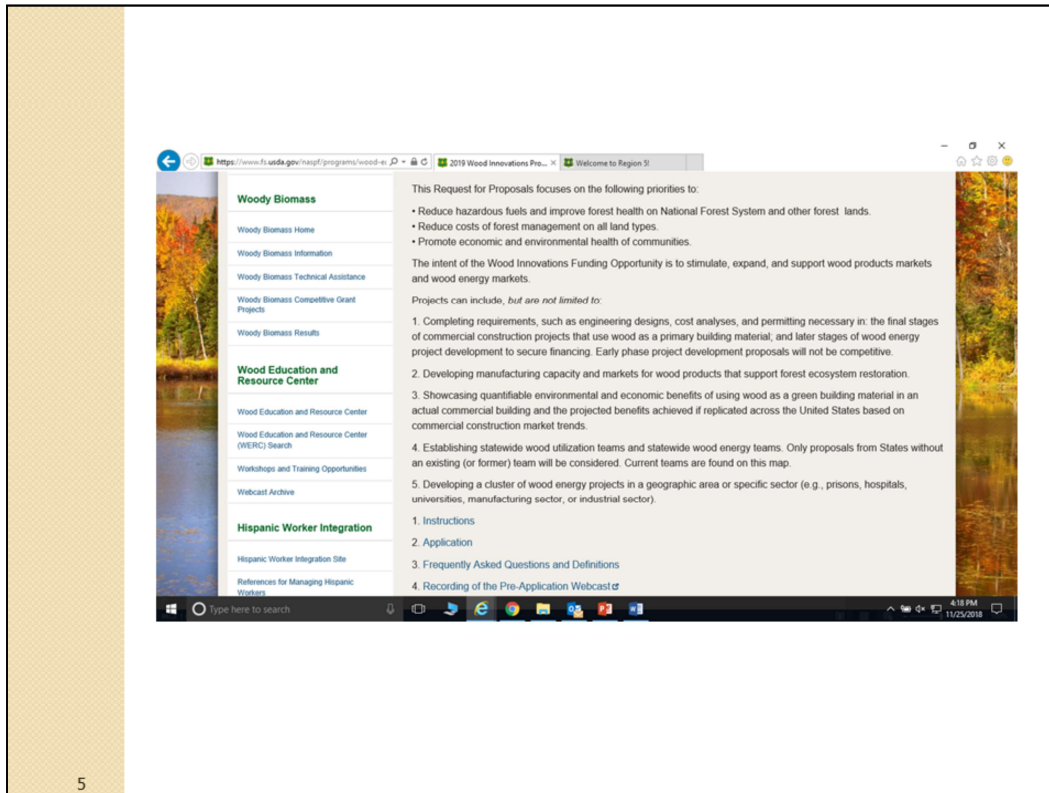
**Synopsis of Funding Opportunity:**  
 The U.S. Forest Service requests proposals to substantially expand and accelerate wood energy and wood products markets throughout the United States to support forest management needs on National Forest System and other forest lands.

This Request for Proposals focuses on the following priorities to:

- Reduce hazardous fuels and improve forest health on National Forest System and other forest lands.
- Reduce costs of forest management on all land types.

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**Wood Education and Resource Center Web Site (WERC) -**



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## WERC Website

- 1) Application instructions and link to forms
- 2) FAQs
- 3) Recording of national pre-application webinar
- 4) Examples of successful applications
- 5) Explanation about evaluation criteria

## What is purpose of USFS Wood Innovations Grant Program?



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**Purpose** – Substantially expand and accelerate wood products and wood energy markets throughout U.S. to support forest management needs on **National Forest System and other forest lands**.

### **Three major priorities:**

- 1) Reduce hazardous fuels and improve forest health on National Forest System (i.e. “National Forests”) and other forest lands.
- 2) Reduce cost of forest management.
- 3) Promote economic and environmental health of communities

### **Why is this grant program so needed in California and Hawaii?**

**California Context** - For California, 10,000 green tons or greater per year or 2 MMBF log scale consumption gets our attention, but less lofty aspirations may be plausible if they have well-defined paths to larger accomplishments. The Forest Service in California needs to be “treating” 500,000 ac/yr in California to make headway on ecosystem restoration and fuels reduction, which theoretically would generate about 12.5 million green tons of biomass per year (assume that less than 50% will be accessible or intended for removal) and theoretically yield about 2,500 MMBF of sawlogs (again, assume less than 50% will be accessible or have plans for removal). Cal Fire just declared a similar goal for state and private lands (i.e. 500,000 ac of treatments per year).

**Hawaii Context** – Thousands of acres of federally-assisted 50+ year old tree plantations composed of various eucalyptus species and other species, with limited markets, and limited extraction and manufacturing capacity.

## Application Requirements and Funding Availability

- Eligibility
- Due Date
- Funding
- Match
- Time Period



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**Eligibility** – For-profit entities; state, local and tribal governments; school districts; communities; not-for-profits; and special purpose districts (e.g. public utility districts, fire districts, conservation districts and port authorities).

**Due Date** – All parts emailed to Larry by 5 PM, Wednesday, January 23, 2019

**Funding** – Planned funding is up to \$8.0 million nationwide. Max. grant is generally \$250,000, possibly more if there is “far reaching or significant impact”.

**Match** – Minimum 50% of requested Forest Service grant funds, cash or in-kind, non-federal.

**Time Period** – Cannot exceed Sept 30, 2022 (basically 3 – 3 ½ yrs maximum from approximate date of award).

# Grant Program Changes

- Categories
- Equipment
- Submission
- 10% Hold Back
- Reporting



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**Categories** – Not constrained to any pre-set categories (as in previous years). Open to “how” to help achieve primary purpose.

**Equipment** – No equipment or construction projects, with exception of “stationary wood energy equipment” (has to directly make BTUs for thermal or kilowatts for power, or combination of the two).

**Application Submission** – 2 separate PDF files: Part 1 (contact info is 1-page, and then narrative at no more than 5 pages, and appendices); and Application Part 2 (required forms).

**Match** – 50% of total USFS grant funds requested, cash or in-kind

**10% Hold Back** - 10% of awarded funds can be held-back until all reporting requirements are completed.

**Reporting** – Minor additional reporting for R5 when submit for reimbursable payments.

# Expansion of Wood Energy Markets



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**Purpose** - Stimulate, expand and support wood energy markets that depend on forest residues or forest byproducts generated from all land types.

## **Preferences –**

- 1) Projects that use wood generated from National Forest System and other forest lands with high wildfire risk.
- 2) Immediate and measurable on-the-ground results or substantially stimulate immediate adoption of wood energy.

## **Commercially Available or Proven Technologies (WERC Website FAQs)**

A system that has a proven operating history specific to the proposed application. Such a system is based on established design, and installation procedures and practices. Professional service providers, trades, large construction equipment providers, and labor are familiar with installation procedures and practices. Proprietary and balance of system equipment and spare parts are readily available. Service is readily available to properly maintain and operate the system. An established warranty exists for parts, labor, and performance. (USDA –

<http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2011-title7-vol15/xml/CFR-2011-title7-vol15-sec4280-103.xml>)

## Examples of Previous or Potential Project Submissions to Stimulate Wood Energy Markets



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### **WOOD ENERGY MARKETS**

**Project Cluster** - Develop cluster of projects in a specific geographic area or a specific subsector (e.g. schools, hospitals, conservation camps, conference centers).

**Cooling Project** - Develop cooling project in Central Valley.

**Financing Opportunities** - Develop financing and funding opportunities for small scale biomass power projects (e.g. BioRAM).

**Overcoming Key Market Barriers** - Define and demonstrate how to overcome key market barriers to stimulate expansion of wood energy in the commercial sector.

### **WOOD ENERGY PROJECTS**

**Late Stage Development** - Engineering design, permitting, system impact study and other later stage activities to develop for biomass energy facility.

\*No statewide wood energy team application will be accepted for USFS California Region.



**Category Purpose** – Create or expand demand for non-energy based wood products.

**Preferences** –

- 1) Projects that support commercial building markets and other markets that use innovative wood products (e.g. mass timber)
- 2) Immediate and measurable on-the-ground results.

\*Demonstration projects and applied research may be considered, but should consult with Larry.

## Examples of Current and Potential Project Submissions to Expand Wood Products Markets



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### **IDEAS TO CONSIDER (not exhaustive)**

**Showcase Replicable Design and Methods** – Showcase quantifiable environmental and economic benefits of using wood as a green building material in actual commercial buildings, and projected benefits if replicated across the U.S. based on commercial construction trends.

**Statewide Wood Action Team** – Potentially establish statewide wood utilization team in California focused on using wood in support of USFS Regional and State Forest Action Plan priorities. A Statewide Wood Utilization Team was established last year in Hawaii, but realistically, one for California is unlikely to be supported unless there is a clear and compelling need, taking into account what is already in progress or planned.

**Building Codes** - Facilitate establishing new building codes to support expanded use of wood.

**Manufacturing Capacity** - Develop manufacturing capacity and markets for wood products that support forest ecosystem restoration.

**Final Stage Commercial Construction Projects** - Complete final stage engineering designs, cost analyses, permitting or other requirements for commercial construction projects that use wood as the primary building material.

**Training/Outreach** - Training or outreach about innovative wood construction materials or building designs that incorporate wood into commercial construction (e.g. structural roundwood or mass timber).

## Other Application Requirements or Considerations



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**Match Documentation-** Letters are required to document match commitments (have to add up to total).

**Partners and Management Team** – Appropriate partners and qualified management teams, with clear description of relevant qualifications and roles.

**Duns Number and Contractor Registration** – Recommend obtaining DUNS number and registering at [www.sam.gov](http://www.sam.gov) (procrastination will delay if not cancel award).



**Organization of Application** – Two parts, submitted in two PDF files

**Part 1**

- **Project Summary Page** – Contact information and short description (1 p, does not count against 5 page narrative limit)
- **Narrative and Budget Tables (no more than 5 pp)**
  - a. **Project Narrative** (read and follow the directions and order of the questions)
    - Basic project info (include project length and abstract)
    - Project goals and objectives (bullet format) and how these relate to grant program goals and intent
    - Project description, including specific activities, organized according to goals and objectives, budget alignment, timeline, how progress will be measured, industry involvement, any subgrant or contracting activity and communication and outreach activities.
    - Project impact, anticipated outcomes, deliverables and desired results, making sure it is framed in terms of impacts on wood products or wood energy markets, benefits to forest lands, especially National Forests, and job creation. **INCLUDE ASSUMPTIONS TO SUPPORT PROJECTIONS.**
    - Team and partner qualifications (including experience with prior funded Forest Service funded projects), use appendices for vitae or resumes.
    - Annual progress reports and final reports (regurgitate directions)

- Budget summary and justification, by SF 424A categories, including the 2 budget tables (formatting?).

**- Appendices (letters, feasibility studies etc.)**

– Letters of Support, match commitment letters, all other funds received for project within last 3 yrs, vitae for team members, feasibility assessments, wood supply studies, engineering and other quotes, and miscellaneous supporting items, such as Executive Summaries for directly relevant studies or reports.

NOTE: Very important to have an draft “abstract” to help obtain Letters of Support. Keep in mind end-of-year rush to use vacation time for government employees. Letter of Support from relevant Forest Service office required if plan to Forest Service raw material (District Ranger or Forest Supervisor).

NOTE: Letters must include match commitments and they all need to add up.

**Part 2, Required Forms and Assurances (8)**

## Application Review Process



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**State Level Review** – Forest Service Regional Office staff will screen proposals for administrative requirements and evaluate how pertinent they are to Regional needs. Forest Service California regional priorities are: 1) Pace (“How quickly can the project be implemented at a commercial scale?”), 2) Scale (“How many acres or how much volume will be utilized from “high fire hazard” forested areas?”), and 3) Risk (“What is the chance of nothing happening?”). Hawaii regional priorities focus on use of Hawaii-grown wood, especially plantation species, and projects that complement the Hawaii State Wood Utilization Team activities.

**National Review** – Projects that meet grant program minimum requirements are forwarded to Wood Education and Resource Center (WERC, Princeton, VA) where they are distributed, and reviewed and ranked by a national Review Team.

**WO and USDA Review** – Ranked projects are provided to the Chief of the USFS for consideration of rankings and Regional priorities, and forwarded to USDA Office of the Secretary.

**Projected Dates for Notification and Award** – National Review Team ranked project list will be forwarded to the Forest Service WO about 3/7/2019. The Secretary of Agriculture is expected to make the award announcement around 5/1/2019. The USFS has no control over the date of the announcement.

Grants are normally finalized within about 6 weeks or so after the announcement by the Secretary of Agriculture, depending upon how many corrections are needed, and if the DUNS and SAM registration are properly completed. Applicants can request in writing permission for pre-award authorization to expend funds that they want reimbursed and are part of the grant. If authorized, this permission begins on the date the USFS signs the letter authorizing it.

# Evaluation Criteria & Preferences



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## 100 Points Possible

**Criteria 1** – Alignment with goals and objectives of RFP (15 pts)

**Criteria 2** – Project Description , including required components and reporting requirements (30 pts)

**Criteria 3** – Project impact, including clear and reasonable deliverables and outcomes, realistic presentation of impacts and extent of impact on target markets, and leveraged activities and funds to maximize benefits (35 pts)

**Criteria 4** – Qualifications, relevant experience, and roles of team members (15 pts)

### “Preference”

- 1) Use of wood generated from National Forests and other forest lands with high wildfire risk
- 2) Collaboration with industry partners
- 3) Support of commercial building markets or other markets that use innovative wood products
- 4) Bundling or relevance to multiple wood energy projects in same application

## USFS California Region (R05) Wood & Biomass Utilization Mission

- Retain a competitive and resilient wood products industry infrastructure to help accomplish ecosystem restoration objectives, create and retain jobs, and partially defray management cost.



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### USFS R05 Wood & Biomass Utilization Mission

Retain a competitive and resilient wood products industry infrastructure to help accomplish ecosystem restoration objectives, create and retain jobs, and partially defray management cost.

# Priority Emphasis Areas for USFS California Forest Biomass Program



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## 2019 USFS Priority Emphasis Areas

1. PACE, SCALE AND RISK - Greater than 10,000 green tons biomass or 2 MMBF log scale consumption per year. These types of projects tend to be found with existing infrastructure and businesses, such as biomass power plants (operational & idle), sawmills, veneer plants, particle board plant, and other major wood processing facilities. Affecting minimum of 400 ac/yr and
2. BioMat projects (i.e. less than 5 MW, located in or near forested lands)
3. Leveraging other agency forest health investments in order to treat more acres at landscape or watershed scale, such as Cal Fire Climate Investment and NRCS grant programs, and special Forest Service and USDA programs and agreements, such as Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration, Joint Chiefs, stewardship contracts, Good Neighbor Authority projects et al.
4. Leveraging efforts of Governor's Forest Management Task Force and subcommittees, including other forms of wood utilization, such as mass timber etc.

## Contact Information

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