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Subject: United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service and Natural Resources Conservation Service Joint Chiefs' Landscape Restoration Partnership Proposal Solicitation for Fiscal Year 2022

To: Regional Foresters, Station Directors, IITF Director, and Deputy Chiefs

REPLY DUE JUNE 25, 2021

The Joint Chiefs' Landscape Restoration Partnership is a tool for achieving increased collaboration among federal agencies, states, Tribes, and private partners to target investments for addressing landscape-scale priorities. This partnership exemplifies the shared stewardship model of working together with our partners to further United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) strategic goals. These goals guide our work to ensure projects facilitate rural prosperity and economic development, strengthen the stewardship of private lands through technology and research, and ensure productive and sustainable use of National Forest System lands.

USDA's Forest Service and Natural Resources Conservation Service are requesting proposals for funding under the Joint Chiefs' Landscape Restoration Partnership beginning in fiscal year 2022. The intent of the partnership is to achieve measurable outcomes through coordinated conservation activities on public and private lands. Selected projects will enhance collaboration among Forest Service and Natural Resources Conservation Service, as well as many local, non-governmental, Tribal, and individual landowner stakeholders. The Joint Chiefs' Landscape Restoration Partnership will align with shared stewardship by selecting projects that demonstrate a cross-boundary effort, work at the appropriate scale, and have mutually defined priorities that lead to desired outcomes.

The objectives of the Joint Chiefs' Landscape Restoration Partnership are to 1) reduce and mitigate wildfire threats to communities and landowners; 2) protect water quality and supply for communities and industry; and 3) improve habitat conditions for at-risk species.

Proposals will be evaluated, scored, and selected based on their merit. Proposals may address one, two, or all three of the Joint Chiefs' Landscape Restoration Partnership objectives. The following criteria will be considered in selection:

- Align with USDA priorities.
- Contribute to improved resilience of forests and grasslands to a changing climate.
- Support state and regional priorities.
- Describe project goals, deliverables, and desired outcomes clearly.
- Complete all National Environmental Policy Act requirements and documentation for planned Year One work on public lands by October 1, 2021.
- Include partner support and involvement (non-federal contribution to the project will strengthen application).



- Geographic distribution of individual project activities across the landscape demonstrates a focus on resource conditions and a balance between land ownerships.
- Describe cross-boundary or community planning efforts used to prioritize the work on the landscape for:
 - Wildfire (e.g., firehatched analysis, risk assessments);
 - Water quality and supply (e.g., state technical committee watershed prioritization); and,
 - At-risk species habitat (e.g., recovery plans, state wildlife action plans).

Selected projects are designed to measurably improve the health and resiliency of forest and rangeland ecosystems, while benefiting local communities. Projects leverage technical and financial resources between agencies and with our partners to achieve on-the-ground accomplishments across jurisdictional boundaries. Successful projects use this partnership to focus investment by both agencies within a three-year period and coordinate and accelerate efforts within a shared landscape. The spatial and timing linkages of these projects enable cumulative impacts to be more beneficial and efficient.

Requirements for proposals submitted for fiscal year 2022 funding consideration:

- Proposals must include signatures indicating the support of the Forest Service Forest Supervisor, the Natural Resources Conservation Service State Conservationist, the State Forester (from the respective state agency), and the Forest Service Regional Forester.
- Proposals must include, at a minimum, a combination of activities on private and public land. In most cases, the public land will be within the National Forest System, but alternatively, may be state lands, such as a state forest, state wildlife management area, state park, or combination thereof.
- Proposed activities must include land treatments, as well as education and outreach to local communities about the project.
- Projects may be up to three years in length; however, allocations are made on an annual basis and there is no guarantee of funding in subsequent years.

Proposals should be completed by June 25, 2021, and submitted electronically to the shared mailbox: NRCS.FS.Joint.Chiefs@usda.gov. The attachments provide the required proposal templates. A joint evaluation of proposals will be completed by the Forest Service and Natural Resources Conservation Service at National Headquarters in Washington, D.C. Selections will be announced prior to the beginning of fiscal year 2022.

The proposal timeline for fiscal year 2022 has been extended to allow additional time to define projects that align with shared stewardship landscape priorities. In addition, by announcing selected projects before the start of the fiscal year, this new timeline will facilitate better planning and implementation of selected projects in their first year. We anticipate this timeline will be carried forward into fiscal year 2023 and beyond.

For questions about Joint Chiefs' Landscape Restoration Partnership or proposal submissions, please contact Martin Lowenfish with Natural Resources Conservation Service at (202) 690-4979 or Martin.Lowenfish@usda.gov, Matthew Vandersande with Natural Resources

Conservation Service at (202) 690-1588 or matthew.vandersande@usda.gov, or Clint Cross with the Forest Service at (202) 205-0995 or Clint.Cross@usda.gov.

X

for

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Chief

Enclosures

cc: Jaelith Hall-Rivera, Mark Lichtenstein, Patricia Grantham, Martin Lowenfish, Clint Cross, Tina Terrell, Barney Gyant, Jen Eberline, Deana Wall