

# Boulder County Strategic Fuels Mitigation Grant Program: Fuels Mitigation Grant Application Guidelines

## Application Completion Instructions:

All information for the project must fit into the character limited fields in the application. Attachments other than required maps, landowner match tool, and site visit form **will not be considered** as part of the application packet. SFMG funding requests will not be granted for work already completed.

## Strategic Proposals:

Applications must be strategic in nature to maximize effectiveness of this grant program and should include the following elements:

1. Location within or adjacent to high priority areas (See Section B.1)
2. Implementation across land ownership boundaries.
3. Part of a large, landscape-scale treatment effort or a multi-landowner, community- wide project.
4. Geographic proximity to public or private lands that have been treated or are planned for treatment.
5. Protection of critical watershed

## Local Coordination and Consultation:

Applicants must demonstrate that they have coordinated project development with relevant forestry or wildfire experts. Coordination should be with one or more of the following: Boulder County Wildfire Forest and Grassland Project Coordinator or a forester from the Colorado State Forest Service, Boulder Field Office, Boulder County Parks and Open Space, or the City of Boulder Open Space and Mountain Parks.

## Shared and Leveraged Resources

Projects shall leverage resources (i.e., expertise, staffing, and funding) to maximize effectiveness and efficiency. Preference will be given to applicants who demonstrate landowner match, commitment, and engagement.

## Local Measures to Reduce Wildfire Risk

Preference will be given to applicants who demonstrate efforts to incorporate local programs or approaches that help reduce wildfire risk to people, property, and infrastructure.

Examples of Local Measures:

- Landowner participation in Boulder County Wildfire Partners Programs.
- Participation in the Firewise USA® Program and/or Neighborhood Ambassador Program.
- Implementation of Fire Adapted Community concepts.
- Demonstration of ongoing wildfire outreach and education efforts.
- Involvement in existing slash or mulch collection or chipping programs.
- Adoption of county or local building codes for wildfire mitigation.
- Protection of critical watersheds.

## Application Guidance

Guidance coincides with the boxes A-M in the grant application.

### A. Applicant Information

1. Name of Project: Identify the type of project: forest fuels reduction or grasslands fuels reduction.
2. Fiscal Agent: Applicant must be or have a fiscal agent identified at the time the grant application is submitted.
  - a. The fiscal agent, or appointed fiscal administrator, is responsible for financial matters related to the project such as paying project invoices, grant reimbursement processes, financial accounting, and budget tracking.
  - b. The fiscal agent must be registered with the IRS and have a tax identification number.
3. Type of Organization: Private (e.g., large acre private properties and HOAs), non- governmental organization, or local governmental entity.
4. Contact Person/Title: Name and title of the project manager and/or lead cooperater, mailing address, phone, and email address
5. Socially Vulnerable Community Project: Click yes if applicable and complete Box N of the application. If not applicable, click no, and leave Box N blank.
6. Match to Other Grant Programs:
  - a. Click the drop-down menu and select the grant that will leverage this application.
  - b. If leveraging more than one grant, provide the name of the additional grants in this box.
  - c. Provide anticipated award notification dates for other potential grant awards.
7. Is this project scalable? Indicate if you are willing to accept partial funding for your proposal.
8. Approximate Acres and Estimated Cost/Acre: Please provide approximate acres to be treated and estimated cost per acre.

### B. Eligibility

1. Project Identification: All projects for consideration shall be identified in one or more of the following:
  - a. Boulder County Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP), or local CWPP
  - b. Boulder County Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP)
  - c. Forest management plan (e.g., Forest Agriculture Plan or NRCS Conservation Action Plan (CAP)

- d. Potential Operational Delineations (PODS)
  - e. A preidentified project footprint (i.e., the St. Vrain Forest Health Project footprint)
  - f. Boulder County Fireshed Focus Areas Map
  - g. High-risk area as identified on a current wildfire risk map  
(Example maps can be found on the [SFMG website](#).)
2. Please provide the name and date of the CWPP: If answered “Other” please provide the name and year of the document.
  3. Type of Project: Forest Fuels Mitigation or Grasslands Fuels Mitigation (If applicable, both boxes can be checked.)
    - a. Forest Mitigation: Please check all boxes that apply. If check the box “Other,” please identify the priority area.
    - b. Grassland Mitigation: Please check all boxes that apply. If check the box “Other,” Please identify the priority area (i.e., is the project identified in a local resource plan, management plan, or community wildfire plan?).
  4. Type of Project: Forest Fuels Mitigation or Grasslands Fuels Mitigation (If applicable, both boxes can be checked.)
    - a. Forest Mitigation: Please check all boxes that apply. If check the box “Other,” please identify the priority area.
    - b. Grassland Mitigation: Please check all boxes that apply. If check the box “Other,” Please identify the priority area (i.e., is the project identified in a local resource plan, management plan, or community wildfire plan?).
  5. Consultation/Partnering: Applicant must demonstrate that they are working with a local forestry agency (CSFS), or wildfire, forest, or grasslands expert on their project.
    - a. Applicants are required to schedule a pre-project site visit before submitting the application with the Boulder County Wildfire Forest and Grassland Project Coordinator and/or identified expert(s), as defined above. *\*It is recommended that the applicant schedule their site visit(s) early in the project development stage to ensure the project is strategic, feasible, and achievable.*
    - b. Submit a site visit form, signed by the consulting forester. The site visit must have been conducted no more than 12 months before application submission (i.e., site visit must be current and relevant).

#### C. Project Goals and Objectives

Please provide a brief project overview. Include key project goals and objectives that meet the grant program eligibility criteria. Discuss how the project meets the goals of the local or county-wide CWPP, as identified in this grant application.

#### D. Budget Matching Contributions

Please refer to Exhibit A, at the end of this document for specific budget instructions and guidelines.

This section shows matching share only (not grant request amount).

- a. Matching contributions must be 50%, or more, of the total project budget (grant request and matching contribution).
  - b. All matching funds, including in-kind match, must be clearly defined in Section F: Budget Narrative.
  - c. Contributors: Specify the name of each match contributor and the dollar amount of each contribution.
  - d. Cash match (dollars): is defined as direct funds made available to the project applicant or fiscal agent (can include other local, state, or federal grant funding, contributions from landowners, or contributions from HOA boards or other institutions).
  - e. In-kind match: includes donated supplies, equipment, staff time or volunteer time directly related to the project.
- E. Total Project Budget (Fillable table in application)
- This section must show the entire budget (includes match contributions and SFMG requested funds) for the proposed project.
- a. SFMG Amount Requested: Break out county grant funds being requested (Personnel, Supplies, Contractual). If not using a budget line item, enter a "0".
  - b. Match: Total dollar amounts from Table D should match these totals.

F. Budget Narrative

Use the budget line items identified in Table E (SFMG request and match contributions) in your budget narrative. Be clear and concise in your descriptions. Ensure that budget narrative amounts match the total budget numbers.

- a. Personnel/labor: personnel time such as a forester or project manager can be funded if the time is tied to project development, layout, management, and implementation. (Cooperators who already receive capacity funding do not qualify.) Time of education and outreach staff may also be included.
- b. Supplies/materials: supplies can include tree paint, flagging, fuel and parts for chainsaws, outreach, and education materials.
- c. Contractual services: total contractual costs for forest and grasslands mitigation projects when hiring a contractor.

G. Project Area Description & Challenges

Describe the project area including, but not limited to, vegetation type, fuel models, terrain, topography, number of acres to be treated; number of homes and/or residents within the project area, potential for additional phases, and proximity to past or planned treatment areas, critical watersheds, and other infrastructure. Discuss challenges and values at risk.

## H. Project Scope of Work

Describe the project Scope of Work, prescription, and scientific foundation for the project. Discuss the treatment type(s) (including type of equipment used) that will be applied to achieve the desired outcomes of the project. Descriptions should be detailed and measurable and may include, for example, target basal area for forest thinning, size of fuelbreak, target tree crown spacing, target fuel loading, target percentage for the reduction of continuous tree and shrub canopy cover, and other relevant data.

Prescriptions should specifically address how projects will comply with Colorado Forestry Best Management Practices (BMPs). Resources include, but not limited to, publications such as CSFS guidelines (<http://csfs.colostate.edu/csfspublications/>) and research articles from relevant studies appropriate to Colorado (e.g., research on Front Range forests by the Colorado Forest Restoration Institute and the Front Range Roundtable (<http://www.frontrangeroundtable.org>), management plans, and the expertise of CSFS foresters, consultants, or other county professionals.

## I. Strategic Value of Project

Discuss the strategic nature of the project (i.e., identified as having a high wildfire risk, falls within POD, BOCO Fireshed Priority Area, etc.). Identify if the proposed project will take place within, adjacent to, or near other planned or previously treated forest or grassland areas. If applicable, explain whether the project will be implemented across landownership boundaries. Describe the project's benefits to the community. If appropriate, explain how the proposed project could serve as a catalyst for future forest or grassland management projects.

## J. Partner Contributions

List and describe your coordination and consultation with participating organizations/groups. Specify the roles and contributions of each partner to the project.

## K. Landowner Engagement

Discuss how landowners are engaged in the project in ways other than through financial match contributions. Describe landowner participation in programs or activities that demonstrate their commitment to mitigation, such as Wildfire Partners (home assessments, community chipping, or rebate programs), the Forest Agriculture Tax program, or the Firewise program.

## L. Timeline

Provide a timeline for the project, including project beginning and end dates, project milestones, and deliverables with specific targets for completion.

## M. Project Sustainability

- a. **Environment:** Discuss the dominant vegetation type to be mitigated (e.g., conifers, shrubs, grasslands) and how the treatments will be maintained. Include the return intervals of the vegetation types in the project area for timing of maintenance and re-

treatments (e.g., thinning, mastication, mowing).

- b. **Monitoring and Maintenance:** Identify who will provide project monitoring and maintenance services, how this will be funded, and describe what monitoring and maintenance will be necessary to sustain long-term benefits. Describe how invasive species will be monitored and managed over time. Describe how the landowners are committed to long-term management activities for the project area (e.g., additional forest thinning, pruning, mowing, grazing, insect and disease monitoring, noxious weeds, etc.).
- c. **Outreach and Education:** Discuss how the project will incorporate outreach and education efforts, before during, and after project completion. Demonstrate the benefits of the project to the community. Describe how you will engage residents, community members, and partners in potential future projects.

#### N. Socially Vulnerable Community

- a. Please describe the factors that contribute to this community being identified as socially vulnerable.
  - i. Social vulnerability is the disproportionate susceptibility of some groups to the negative impacts of natural hazards or disasters. This susceptibility has its roots in historical and structural discrimination often created and maintained through government policies. Boulder County is committed to addressing these inequities.
  - ii. Some populations identified as being more vulnerable are older adults, children, people in underrepresented racial or ethnic groups, people with limited English proficiency, people with low or no incomes, people with disabilities, and people with medical illnesses.
- b. What are the expected benefits to the community because of the proposed mitigation project?

## How to Apply

### Required Grant Packet Checklist

- a. Application
- b. Project Map
- c. Landowner Match Tool
- d. Signed Site Visit Form

### Submit

Please combine the grant application and allowable supporting documents into a single PDF or compressed zip folder and submit via email to the CP&P Wildfire Team Grants Administrator: [CPPwildfiregrants@bouldercounty.gov](mailto:CPPwildfiregrants@bouldercounty.gov)

### Grant Timeline

Request for Applications (RFA) Release:

- September 20, 2024

Application Deadline:

- November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024

Anticipated Award Notification Date:

- Late December to Early January

Project Completion Deadline:

- January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2028

### Application Review and Selection Process

Applications will be reviewed by a selection committee of 3-5 professionals with fuels mitigation or planning expertise. Committee members represent non-governmental and local, state, and federal government stakeholder groups. The committee will evaluate, score, and rank all submitted applications and make funding recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC). Final funding approval will be made by the BOCC approximately 8 weeks after the application deadline.

### Award Notification Process

1. If the application is approved by the BOCC, a pre-award notification letter will be sent to the applicant within 1-2 weeks, stating the amount awarded and discussing the next steps.



2. Upon receipt of the applicant's W-9 and final Scope of Work (SOW), the grant agreement and grant reimbursement packet will be sent to the grantee for signature and documentation of required match.
3. Match Documentation:
  - a. Applicant will confirm and commit to the grant and landowner match contributions when signing the final Grant Agreement.
  - b. If applicant receives notification that they have not been awarded other matching grant funds, and thus cannot secure the 50% match to the SFMG award, the applicant can reapply in subsequent county grant cycles.
4. If funded, the SFMG fuels mitigation award will have a 3-year life span.

Reporting Requirements:

1. Applicant must complete the supplied forms with each reimbursement request, identifying acres treated, wood utilization (if applicable), and type of treatment.
2. During the life of the fuel's mitigation project, the applicant must schedule periodic site visits with the Boulder County Wildfire Partners Forest and Grasslands Project Coordinator.

Completion of Project Requirements:

At the completion of the project, a final report will be required. The final report for the applicant's fuels mitigation project should have a narrative of accomplishments that includes the following:

1. Number of acres treated
2. Cost per acre to treat
3. Type of treatment(s)
4. If wood products were generated, discuss type of wood product, volume, and value.
5. List of partners who contributed to the project
6. Digital "before and after" photos
7. Spatial data (i.e., shapefiles) for treated areas

# Exhibit A: Budget Information and Guidelines

These guidelines are intended to assist the applicant in completing the budget boxes.

The Boulder County SFMG pre-awards will be contingent upon the applicant being awarded other matching funds. If the applicant is unable to provide the required 50% match as explained below, the grant funds will not be awarded. The applicant can re-apply for this funding if they secure the required matching funds for their project.

1. There is a \$2.4 million budget for 2024, distributed over two grant cycles (Spring and Fall). Of this amount, planning grants will be capped at \$250,000. The county will fund up to five (5) planning proposals annually at a maximum of \$50,000 each.
2. The SFMG breakdown of cost share is as follows:
  - a. The SFMG program requires a minimum 50% match provided by other grant programs or funding sources.
  - b. The county will fund 50% of the total project budget.
  - c. Applicants providing **landowner** project match (cash match, in-kind match, or a combination of both) will be given preference. Applicants will be scored higher or lower based on the percentage of landowner match contributed (i.e., the higher the landowner match, the more points given in the budget section).
3. The applicant must complete the landowner match tool in the application (Question/section/box...) The applicant must also describe the landowner contribution, beyond financial contributions (Box K?).
4. For communities identified as Socially Vulnerable:
  - a. Social vulnerability is the disproportionate susceptibility of some groups to the negative impacts of natural hazards or disasters. This susceptibility has its roots in historical and structural discrimination often created and maintained through government policies. Boulder County is committed to addressing these inequities.
  - b. Some populations identified as being more vulnerable are older adults, children, people in underrepresented racial or ethnic groups, people with limited English proficiency, people with low or no incomes, people with disabilities, and people with medical illnesses.
  - c. A socially vulnerable community project is defined as an entire community, HOA, or large group of property owners in the same geographical area seeking to implement fuels mitigation or a planning project (i.e., CWPP).
  - d. Projects in communities identified as socially vulnerable using the [CSFS Forest Atlas Social Vulnerability Index \(SVI\) tool](#) and/or [CDC SVI map on our](#)

[webpage](#) will be eligible to reduce the required match to 25% with SFMG providing up to 75% of the total project funding. The applicant must show evidence that the entire community is socially vulnerable and that they have secured state, federal, or local grant funding for their project.

- e. Applicant knowledge of the local demographics and challenges is also valuable in helping to determine social vulnerability in the identified project area. If applicable, please provide relevant local knowledge in Box N (Socially Vulnerable Community).
5. **Matching contributions:** can be cash (hard match), in-kind (soft match), or a combination of both. Budget requests, including SFMG requested funds and matching contributions, must be clearly explained in the budget narrative section of the grant application.
- a. Cash matching contributions may be in the form of local government, state, or federal support for the project.
  - b. Cash matching contributions from landowners can include private individuals, HOAs, family trusts, etc. Landowner contribution will not be considered as cash match if it is from a governmental grant source (local, state, or federal).
  - a. Cash matching funds cannot be used to directly pay for volunteer labor, homeowner labor, personnel coordination, or grant administration activities, such as compiling paperwork; however, these activities are valuable and can be applied as in-kind or soft match to the project.
  - c. In-kind contributions must be clearly quantified and justified in the budget narrative section.
  - d. In-kind contributions can include volunteer time at a Boulder County base hourly rate of \$23.23 for tasks outlined in the proposal. Applicants will be required to track hours using the hourly rate.
  - e. Applications that leverage strong local commitment through landowner cash match and robust community engagement will be given greater preference.
6. Funds will be awarded on a project-to-project basis depending upon the selection criteria and available funding.
7. Boulder County reserves the right to award full or partial funding to successful applicants if the project is scalable.