



Forest Service News Release

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The Southern Arizona Resource Advisory Committee Announces a SPECIAL Request for Proposals -Investing Fees Generated on Forest Service Lands to Support Local Community Projects on Federal and non-Federal Lands in Pinal and Maricopa Counties

Tucson, Arizona, September 20 2021 - The Southern Arizona Resource Advisory Committee (RAC) is accepting grant proposals from September 20 through October 4 from federal agencies, state and local governments, tribal governments, private and nonprofit entities, and landowners for protection, restoration, and enhancement of resource conditions and roads/trail maintenance and obliteration. Projects can be on National Forest System lands, and non-Federal lands where projects would benefit local communities.

Funds are from the [Secure Rural Schools Program Title II Special Projects on Federal Lands](#) and are generated from fees of multi-use activities such as grazing permits, timber production, and special use permits, which are retained by the forest service and allocated to specific projects under the authority of the [Secure Rural Schools and Communities Self-Determination Act](#).

Available Funds: Funds are available by county for Maricopa (\$118,080) and Pinal (\$178,900). This includes Santa Catalina Ranger District of Coronado National Forest and the Mesa Ranger District of Tonto National Forest.

There is no maximum dollar limit however, applicants are encouraged to make proposals scalable. Note: funds available within each county are for projects in that county. In the previous funding cycles, approved projects ranged in value from \$3,000 to \$180,000, with an average value of \$39,000.

Project Proposal Eligibility: At least 50% of all project funds are to be used for projects that primarily benefit road maintenance, decommissioning, or obliteration; or restoration of streams and watersheds.

The following types of projects are eligible:

- Road, trail, and infrastructure maintenance or obliteration
- Soil productivity improvement
- Forest ecosystem health improvements
- Watershed restoration, preservation, and maintenance
- Restoration, maintenance, and improvement of wildlife and fish habitat

- Control of noxious and exotic weeds
- Re-establishment of native species
- Sustainable recreation opportunities
- Other (fire prevention, integrated pest management, etc.)

Project Proposal Evaluation

It is important to the Southern Arizona Resource Advisory Committee to solicit a diversity of proposals that support local communities and their ties to National Forest System lands, and that we work together to promote: community engagement, partnerships, collaboration, and local leadership; to improve the sustainability of local economies, ecological services and stewardship opportunities on public lands.

Project proposals will be evaluated on how well they address the goals listed above and demonstrate cost-effectiveness, enhance the quality of life in our region, provide employment opportunities, and improve watershed and ecosystem health. If projects can be scalable, please indicate how they can be scaled up or down and provide a corresponding budget.

Potential applicants need to discuss the proposal and have the support of the local District Ranger before submitting. District Ranger contacts are on the left panel of the forest home page: Tonto NF (<https://www.fs.usda.gov/tonto/>) and Coronado NF (<https://www.fs.usda.gov/coronado/>). For road projects, applicants should ensure the local District Ranger work with Forest Service engineers and County Road Department to plan and implement needed work.

Proposal Submission:

Please use the proposal [templates](#) and ensure your proposal contains all the information in the [Proposal Requirements Checklist](#). Additional information for applicants can be found here: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/main/coronado/workingtogether/advisorycommittees>.

Please send completed proposals to Dana Backer (dana.backer@usda.gov) or 300 W. Congress Street, 6th Floor, Tucson, AZ 85701.

Deadline for submission of project proposals is **Monday October 4, 2021 at 6 p.m.** Proposals submitted after 6 p.m. will not be accepted.

The Southern Arizona RAC will be reviewing proposals in a public meeting in October. The meeting announcement will be posted on the Coronado National Forest website and in the Federal register.

More information about the Title II Program is at <https://www.fs.usda.gov/working-with-us/secure-rural-schools> and information about Resource Advisory Committees, previous proposals, and templates can be found at <https://cms.fs.usda.gov/working-with-us/secure-rural-schools/title-2>.

For questions regarding the Southern Arizona RAC, please contact RAC Coordinator, Dana Backer (dana.backer@usda.gov), at the Coronado National Forest Supervisor's Office.

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