



Washington Office | June 2024

Wood Products Infrastructure Assistance Program

Program Overview

The USDA Forest Service Wood Products Infrastructure Assistance program supports projects for facilities that purchase and process byproducts from ecosystem restoration projects in areas at risk of unnaturally severe wildfire or insect or disease infestation through funding from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL).

The intent is to substantially decrease the cost of conducting restoration projects involving vegetation removal on federal and Tribal lands and expand industry use. These ecosystem restoration byproducts could include trees and woody biomass harvested through timber sales, thinning, hazardous fuels reduction treatments, or other restoration management activities. Annual available program funding amount may vary.

Program Eligibility

To be eligible for funding, the project facility must be in close proximity to federal or Tribal lands and procure raw materials from federal or Tribal lands. Eligible applicants include:

- For-profit entities
- State, local governments
- Indian Tribes
- School districts
- Communities
- Not-for-profit organizations
- Institutions of higher education
- Special purpose districts (e.g., public utilities districts, fire districts, conservation districts, and ports)

Project facility or sourcing area must be located in an area identified as being in high or very high need of ecosystem restoration.

Funding Priority

Provide financial assistance to an entity seeking to establish, reopen, retrofit, expand, or improve a sawmill or other wood-processing facility that will utilize the byproducts from forest management activities on federal or Tribal land that have been identified as at risk for fire, insect, or disease and a high priority for ecological restoration.

Applicants are encouraged to show a clear benefit to underserved communities (defined by Executive Order 13985 as “populations sharing a particular characteristic, as well as geographic communities, that have been systematically denied a full opportunity to participate in aspects of economic, social, and civic life”), the communities where they reside, or the forest areas that they value. Applicants are asked to identify if the project directly or indirectly benefits disadvantaged communities by using the Council on Environmental Quality’s [Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool](#).

Additional priority will be given to projects meeting the following criteria:

- Project will reduce the cost of ecosystem restoration activities.
- Project facility will procure a significant amount (approximately >50%) of the raw materials from federal or Tribal land in need of ecosystem restoration.
- Applicant shows that at least 25% of the total project cost will originate from non-federal dollars.

The preference for match is waived for tribal applications and projects which demonstrate significant benefits to disadvantaged communities.

Funding Information

Minimum funding request: \$50,000

Maximum funding request: \$1 million

Federal funds cannot be used to fund federal involvement in the project.

Match

There is no requirement for financial match. There is a preference for projects to provide at least 25% match. Any proposed match must be directly associated with the completion of the proposed project activities.

****Match is waived for tribal applications and projects demonstrating significant benefit for disadvantaged communities.****

Operating Costs

Federal funds and cooperator match cannot be used to fund general operating costs, which are expenses associated with day-to-day operation and administration of a facility or business.

Construction

Federal funds and cooperator match cannot be used for construction of buildings (*facilities*). However, federal funds can be used to support engineering, permitting, or design costs for a facility.

Equipment

Procurement of mobile equipment (*e.g., forklifts, skidders, feller bunchers, implements or attachments to mobile equipment*) will NOT be funded. Use of federal funds to lease mobile equipment will be allowed if they are not lease-to-own arrangements. The purchase of mobile equipment will be allowed for Indian Tribes only.

Stationary or permanently installed equipment are the only types of equipment eligible for purchase with federal funds. Applicants should be aware that the purchase of equipment greater than \$5,000 with Forest Service funds creates a federal interest in the equipment until the fair market value of the equipment falls below \$5,000.

Equipment purchased with non-federal funding does not create a federal interest in the equipment.

Application Information

The Notice of Funding Opportunity is anticipated to be made available during National Forest Products Week in mid-October.

Application information and forms will be available on grants.gov and the [Wood Innovations website](#)

Applicants must be registered with the System for Award Management (SAM), which is located at <https://sam.gov/>. DO NOT go through a third party that may charge for registration. There is no charge for registering at SAM.gov. This process will take time, so please register immediately.

Proposal Submission

Proposed Deadline: December following the October Announcement. Applications will be emailed to your Forest Service Regional Wood Innovations Coordinator. No proposals will be accepted by fax or hard copy. Incomplete proposals and those received past the official deadline will not be accepted.

Regional Program Contacts: Questions that arise should be addressed to USDA Forest Service Regional Wood Innovations Coordinators. Contact information for the Regional Wood Innovations Coordinators, by state, can be found below or at the following weblink: [USDA Forest Service Regional Wood Innovations Coordinator Contacts](#).

Award of Funding Notice: Award announcements are anticipated for April/May after the application deadline. Successful applicants will receive notification from the appropriate Forest Service Regional Wood Innovations Coordinator.

National Grant Manager Contact:

Adam Smith
Wood Innovations Specialist
adam.smith5@usda.gov
(531) 289-8147