



OREGON DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY
COMMUNITY FOREST PROGRAM
FACT SHEET

What -- The Community Forest and Open Space Conservation (aka Community Forest) Program is a grant program of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Forest Service, that provides financial assistance to local governments, Tribal governments, and qualified nonprofit entities for establishing Community Forests through acquisition of private lands threatened with conversion to non-forest use. The USDA Forest Service has issued a formal Request for Applications.

Why – To maintain working forests that otherwise would be lost to non-forest conversion so these forests provide a sustainable flow of economic, social and environment benefits to the community.

Who – Local governments, and qualified non-profit entities, whose mission is to own and manage forestland for forestry purposes, apply through the Oregon Department of Forestry. Tribal governments apply directly to the USDA Forest Service. Landowners are willing sellers who support the project.

When – Applications from local government and qualified non-profit organizations are due to the Oregon Department of Forestry by close-of-business, May 15, 2012.

How Much – The maximum amount that can be applied for is \$400,000. Grant funds must be matched dollar for dollar with qualified non-federal funds, in kind contributions or bargain sales. Funds may be used to cover the cost of acquisition (as determined by a qualified appraisal) and costs of due diligence.

Award – All applications are evaluated collectively at the national level by the USDA Forest Service in terms of applicant eligibility and property eligibility. National selection and award of grants are based on: 1) the type and extent of community benefits provided, 2) extent and nature of community engagement, 3) amount of matching funds leveraged, 4) extent to which the community forest contributes to a landscape conservation initiative, 5) extent of due diligence already completed, 6) the likelihood of the property's conversion to non-forest use and 7) project costs to the federal government.

Long-Term Management -- Community Forests must be managed per the terms of a Community Forest Plan developed through broad community involvement with the assistance of natural resource and education professionals. At a minimum, Community Forest Plans provide a description of the benefiting community, the type and extent of economic, social and environmental benefits provided to the community and set forth the conditions under which public access will be provided.

Oregon Framework for Desired Projects -- Oregon Community Forest Program projects should have a strong landowner/public forestry/outdoor education component that expands and develops additional capacity to forestry education efforts within Oregon. Oregon prefers projects that exhibit the following:

- The Community Forest Plan's long-term management for forestry purposes is set forth through a written and approved *Forest Stewardship/Oregon Tree Farm System* forest management plan.
- The applicant is a family forestry related nonprofit organization with local forestland owner and community engagement in their governance; and with demonstrated financial and organizational capacity to actively manage forestland.
- The proposed property is certified, or will become certified, by the American Tree Farm System, Forest Stewardship Council, and/or Sustainable Forestry Initiative.
- The eligible property already demonstrates effective forest stewardship and sustainable forestry as opposed to being in a degraded condition needing forest restoration and rehabilitation.
- The project supports implementation of the *Oregon Conservation Strategy*.
- The project is located within an urban-rural interface area and is threatened with conversion to a non-forestry use.

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