

# **Oregon Federal Forest Restoration Program**

## **Call for Technical Assistance and Science Support (TASS) Projects**

### **Supporting Federal Forest Restoration Efforts of Forest Collaboratives in Oregon**

#### **Overview**

The Oregon State Legislature approved continued funding of Oregon Department of Forestry's Federal Forest Restoration (FFR) Program for the 2021-2023 biennium (July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2023) at \$3.6 million (Current Service Level). The goal of the FFR Program is to increase the pace, scale, and quality of forest restoration work to improve the resilience of federal forests managed by the Forest Service and BLM across Oregon, in a manner that leverages collaborative efforts and contributes to the long-term vitality of regional economies and rural communities.

ODF has supported a wide range of activities through the FFR Program to increase the capacity, efficiency, and effectiveness of collaborative groups and federal agencies in their efforts to restore Oregon's forests. FFR provides the funds and programmatic guidance for the FFR Collaborative Grant program offered through the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB). Technical Assistance and Science Support (TASS) funds are intended to complement the OWEB Forest Collaborative Grant program in improving the capacity of collaborative groups to increase the pace, scale, and quality of restoration in Oregon's federal forest lands.

FFR recognizes that collaborative groups sometimes need technical assistance or science support from outside of their core staff or membership to improve the collaborative group's capacity to accomplish restoration work. TASS awards address this need by funding partnership projects between collaboratives and technical assistance/science support providers which collaboratives would not be able to accomplish without expert external assistance or support. For the 2021-2023 biennium, ODF has up to \$250,000 to contract services to support Technical Assistance and Science Support (TASS) projects.

#### **Types of Projects Considered**

Technical Assistance and Science Support (TASS) projects are intended to provide information, learning, analysis, plans, designs, templates, tools, or other kinds of capacity to local collaborative groups to increase their impact at the local scale. Examples of past and potential projects include:

- Fire history and stand development studies that provide site-specific information on historic stand structure and how to move it to a more resilient state
- Outreach and Communications: data collection, planning, product design/development, training
- Workshops, trainings, and other opportunities for collaborative group members, practitioners, and stakeholders to learn from the latest scientific research and literature
- Monitoring to support collaborative learning about the effects of specific treatments or restoration activities (ecological and socio-economic)
- Development of guidance or background documents for topics of collaborative interest
- Collection and analysis of bio-physical data that supports planning of restoration treatments
- Demonstration projects: design, development, implementation, evaluation, communications

Proposals for the 2021-23 biennium are not limited to the types of projects listed above, which are only offered as examples. Proposals for other types of projects that use external technical assistance or science support to build the capacity of collaboratives are encouraged.

TASS projects should have a clearly defined deliverable that will be made publicly available at the completion of the project. TASS projects should have a collective learning component. Highly competitive projects will have deliverables that are applicable in one place and have relevance for other collaborative groups now or in the future - deliverables that are interpretable and useable by other collaboratives. Project proposers may be asked to present their work and deliverable at regional collaborative gatherings or via a webinar to facilitate learning across multiple collaborative groups. Project proposers are encouraged to include peer learning opportunities and forums into their proposed scope of work and project budgets.

Projects seeking funds to support core staff or core stakeholder leader members of collaborative groups should apply for a Forest Collaborative grant offered through OWEB and explain how their proposed project develops or advances a Zone of Agreement or improves the governance or organization of their collaborative. The OWEB Forest Collaborative grants are designed to support capacity within the collaborative. TASS projects should demonstrate the need for expert support or assistance from outside the collaborative group and propose a project partnership that includes a) one or more collaborative groups seeking specific technical assistance or science support and b) an external partner that can propose a clear and specific scope of assistance or support services to meet those collaborative group needs.

### **Administrative Structure of TASS projects**

When a TASS award is made to a project partnership, ODF will develop and execute a grant agreement with the technical assistance / science support partner to provide the proposed services to the collaborative group. The TASS service provider will be responsible for coordination with both the collaborative and ODF on the project and for delivery of the products specified in the contract. Executing the TASS grant agreement with the collaborative group that will receive the TASS services (or with the fiscal agent for the collaborative), as opposed to an external TASS provider, will only be considered in unique circumstances.

### **Submission and Review Process**

Collaborative representatives and TASS providers should work together to develop partnership project concepts and then should work directly with ODF Federal Forest Restoration Program Coordinators or the FFR Program Lead to refine and submit project ideas. Please see below for the appropriate FFR staff representative based on geography. Please work early and often with your FFR Coordinator while developing your project concept. While FFR Coordinators can provide insights on program priorities and help to develop project concepts, writing and submitting a project proposal in Word format is the responsibility of the applicant. **Project concepts are due to FFR team members by 5 pm PST on November 15<sup>th</sup>.**

The Federal Forest Restoration Program staff will review all proposals in a team setting and prioritize projects for funding in mid-December. In addition to FFR team members, three external reviewers who are familiar with the technical assistance and science support needs of forest collaboratives and with the delivery of those services to collaboratives in Oregon will be recruited to participate in the TASS reviews.

Project proposals can be simple and brief. They should be submitted in Word format and include:

- Contact information for the collaborative group(s) requesting technical assistance or science support
- Contact information for the technical assistance or science support provider delivering services to the collaborative(s)
- Contact information for any National Forests or BLM Districts involved in or expressing support for the TASS project. What Federal land management unit will this project focus on or be located within?
- Name of specific restoration project on federal lands that the request is tied to, if any
- Amount of contract funds requested and description of any match or leverage provided

- Brief statement of need and goals for the project. Why is Technical Assistance or Science Support needed? Why is this a critical time for this project?
- Brief description of the project activities proposed (what services will delivered or provided) and how those activities address the need for the project. What Technical Assistance or Science Support will be provided?
- Brief description of the anticipated benefit or impact of the project. Please quantify or explain how the pace, scale, or quality of restoration is increased by the project and/or how the proposed activities improve efficiency or lead to innovations.
- Description of how the project can be used or leveraged by other collaborative groups and/or forums. Include discussion of any collective learning opportunities to extend the reach of the project deliverable.

### **Time Line for TASS Project Solicitation, Award, and Implementation**

Mid-September 2021	Call for Projects Released
Mid-September to Mid-November	Discuss Project Ideas with FFR Program Staff, Develop Proposal
November 15 2021	Proposals Due
Early December 2021	Review of Proposals
Mid to late December 2021	Award Letters Sent
January 2022	Contracts developed and executed
January 2022 to May 2023	Conduct and Complete TASS Projects (Note: includes 1 full field season)

### **Evaluation Criteria for TASS Projects**

TASS proposals will be evaluated against the following criteria. A proposal does not need to meet and score high for each criteria to be selected, but proposals that meet multiple criteria and more strongly will be prioritized for funding.

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Maximum Points</b>
Proposed and/or supported in writing by a local collaborative group with diverse stakeholder participation and established methods to develop shared understanding and stakeholder agreement	20
Improves the capacity of collaboratives to increase the pace, scale and quality of federal forest restoration in Oregon	10
Produces and/or advances agreement within the collaborative that facilitates the completion of National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) planning of restoration projects	15
Increases the scope and/or complexity of restoration projects on federal lands in Oregon	20
Results in new learning for collaboratives; the sharing or dissemination of learning; and/or shared understanding, agreement, and/or adaptive management	10
Projects that result in collaboratives working more strategically, efficiently, and effectively	5
Project approach or results are transferable or replicable in other collaborative groups or settings	20

Because TASS funding is limited this biennium and the FFR Program seeks to serve all regions of the state, TASS awards may give priority to supporting collaboratives that did not receive TASS support in the 2019-21 biennium or are not competing for a Forest Collaborative grant through OWEB in the Fall 2021 cycle.

**Federal Forest Restoration Program Contacts:**

<b>ODF FFR Program Team Contacts</b>	<b>Phone</b>	<b>E-mail</b>	<b>Geography</b>
Mike Billman	541-362-6760	<a href="mailto:mike.e.billman@oregon.gov">mike.e.billman@oregon.gov</a>	Umatilla NF Wallowa-Whitman NF
Justin Hallett	541-891-2103	<a href="mailto:justin.t.hallett@oregon.gov">justin.t.hallett@oregon.gov</a>	Fremont-Winema NF Lakeview BLM
Chris Rudd	541-471-4245	<a href="mailto:chris.c.rudd@oregon.gov">chris.c.rudd@oregon.gov</a>	Rogue-Siskiyou NF Umpqua NF Medford BLM Roseburg BLM Coos Bay BLM
Ryan Miller	541-620-0341	<a href="mailto:ryan.miller@oregon.gov">ryan.miller@oregon.gov</a>	Deschutes NF Malheur NF Mt Hood NF (east side) Ochoco NF Prineville BLM
Kyle Sullivan	541-285-8685	<a href="mailto:kyle.m.sullivan@oregon.gov">kyle.m.sullivan@oregon.gov</a>	Mt Hood NF (west side) Siuslaw NF Willamette NF Northwest Oregon BLM