

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 goal of Oregon Department of Forestry's (ODF) Federal Forest Restoration (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 Forest Collaborative Grant (FCG) 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.

The FFR Program 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 2023-2025 biennium, ODF has up to \$250,000 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 forest 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 existing conditions toward greater resilience
- 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 vegetation 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 2023-25 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. 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, for more information on that joint ODF/OWEB grant program visit: <https://www.oregon.gov/oweb/grants/pages/forest-collaboratives.aspx>. Where Forest Collaborative Grants are intended to support internal staff, TASS projects are for external support and should demonstrate the need for expert support or assistance from outside the collaborative group. TASS projects should 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 Unit Foresters/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 staff while developing your project concept. While FFR staff can provide insights on program priorities and help to develop project concepts, writing and submitting a project proposal is the responsibility of the applicant. **Project applications are due by 5 pm PST on December 15th.**

The Federal Forest Restoration Program staff will review all proposals in a team setting and prioritize projects for funding in January. 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.

To apply for a TASS grant, complete an application form at the link here: <https://forms.office.com/g/VHpJGDjStL>

Time Line for TASS Project Solicitation, Award, and Implementation

October 13, 2023	Call for Projects Released
Mid-October to Mid-December	Discuss Project Ideas with FFR Program Staff, Develop Proposal
December 15, 2023	Proposals Due
January 2024	Review of Proposals
January 26, 2024	Award Letters Sent
February 2024	Grant Agreements developed and executed

February 2024 to June 2025

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.

Criteria	Maximum Points
Produces and/or advances agreement within the collaborative that facilitates the completion of National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) planning of restoration projects. Project is tied to a specific NEPA planning area(s).	20
Project proposal demonstrates a high likelihood project will be successfully completed.	20
Letter of support from federal agency clearly describes how they will be utilizing the deliverables of this project, how it will lead to increased stakeholder/public agreement and understanding of restoration projects, and accelerated project planning.	20
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	15
Project is complementary to existing or previous FFR Program investments	10
Results in new learning for collaboratives; the sharing or dissemination of learning; and/or shared understanding, agreement, and/or adaptive management	5
Project approach or results are transferable or replicable in other collaborative groups or settings. Project contains collective learning opportunity for other collaborative groups.	5
Improves the capacity of collaboratives to increase the pace, scale and quality of federal forest restoration in Oregon.	5

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