

Hazardous Fuels Transportation Assistance Program

Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO):

Notice of Funding Opportunity Summary

This notice of funding opportunity (NOFO) for the Hazardous Fuels Transportation Assistance (HFTA) Program is authorized and funded by the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) (Public Law No: 117-169, Subtitle D, Sec. 23002(a)(5)). This provision includes “the hauling of material removed to reduce hazardous fuels to locations where that material can be utilized” and executed as a Wood Innovations grant under Section 8643 of the Agricultural Improvement Act of 2018 (7 U.S.C. 7655d). Projects must 1) remove hazardous materials from National Forest System Lands (NFS) and/or demonstrate direct benefit to National Forest System (NFS) lands, 2) explain how and why it reduces hazardous fuels, and 3) describe and provide documentation showing why transportation of the hazardous fuels to facility locations where they can be utilized or processed (e.g. mills etc.) is the limiting factor to removal. These grants are a key tool to accomplish the objectives of Presidential Executive Order (EO) 14225 (expanding timber production), EO 14223 (imports of timber and lumber) and EO 14154 (energy). Each grant is a maximum of \$5 million and a recipient provides a match of at least 50% non-federal funds. Project level applications will only be accepted from existing projects, e.g. Forest Service Contracts and Agreements and wood supply agreements.

Information and Inquiries

Additional application information including the program’s Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document can be found at: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/managing-land/forest-management/products/hazardous-fuels-transport-assist-grants>

The National Wild Turkey Federation is our supporting partner assisting in the solicitation of Hazardous Fuels Transportation Assistance applications. Additional information will also be on NWTF’s website: <https://www.nwtf.org/content-hub/2025-hazardous-fuels-transportation-assistance-program>.

For inquiries specific to the content of the NOFO requirements, send an email to: NFSWOHFTA@usda.gov

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

This NOFO for the Hazardous Fuels Transportation Assistance (HFTA) Program is authorized and funded by the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) (Public Law 117-169, Subtitle D, Sec. 23002(a)(5)). This provision includes “the hauling of material removed to reduce hazardous fuels to locations

where that material can be utilized” and will be executed as a Wood Innovations grant under Section 8643 of the Agricultural Improvement Act of 2018 (7 U.S.C. 7655d). The HFTA program has the goal of increasing the removal of hazardous fuels from National Forest System lands, and/or the removal of hazardous fuels which benefits National Forest System lands.

This grant will support the transport of hazardous fuels materials to facilities for processing into wood products and energy. Successful applicants must demonstrate how transportation costs have become the limiting factor that is impeding the removal and transportation of hazardous fuels off of/adjacent to NFS lands. For example, explain how transportation-related costs have adversely impacted the project from an existing USDA Forest Service (Forest Service) Contract/Agreement award until now (e.g. nearest mill has closed, or this material is Timber Subject to Agreement that is not economical to remove but is increasing hazardous fuels by remaining). Each proposal and/or project will be reviewed by a Forest Service-led team to determine eligibility.

Proposals are encouraged from an array of applicants including manufacturing facilities, biomass power plants, and logging contractors. Multiple projects from the same applicant are acceptable. Hazardous Fuels Transportation projects will only be accepted from existing awarded projects, e.g. timber sale contracts and stewardship agreements or projects that benefit NFS lands through the removal of hazardous fuels. Projects that do not occur on NFS lands must demonstrate direct spatial and temporal relevance to NFS lands. If the applicant is not the Forest Service project holder, then the applicant must provide documentation proving their right to procure hazardous fuels (e.g. draft supply agreement showing material origin and quantity).

Examples of potential projects (not all inclusive), defined by product and type, are listed below:

Example A: Projects that include the transportation of **biomass and other non-merchantable materials**, such as slash or chipped slash (e.g. Adding Optional Timber or Timber Subject to Agreement material in existing NFS Contracts and Agreements, which would require a contract modification).

Example B: Projects that include transportation of **merchantable materials**, such as large sawlogs (e.g. Timber included in NFS Contracts and Agreements).

Example C: Projects that include the transportation **all materials** (e.g. merchantable and non-merchantable) from NFS Contracts and Agreements (Example A & B).

Example D: Projects that include the transportation of **residual materials and by-products** from manufacturing processes to a location where they can be utilized. Only materials generated from NFS lands or that directly benefit NFS lands are appropriate for reimbursement.

Applicants may submit a proposal with multiple contracts and/or agreements for locations that require a transportation incentive for a maximum combined total request of \$5 million. For applications with multiple projects, each project must have a stand-alone budget (including

50% non-federal match). Entities that have subsidiaries and affiliates will be treated as one applicant. Justification for the transportation incentive and funding needs is required for each contract and/or agreement demonstrating why the material would not be used without the incentive. If multiple projects are submitted on one application, projects should be ranked from highest to lowest priority and should be included in the application in priority order. Display the projects in priority order on the cover sheet. Applicants must disclose all other federally-awarded grants specific to the proposed projects and/or agreements.

Background

The Hazardous Fuels Transportation Assistance (HFTA) grants are intended to incentivize the removal of forest products when the transportation costs are a barrier to treatment. The program will also help increase the pace and scale of implementation of efforts to reduce hazardous fuels within Very High and High Wildfire Hazard Potential areas and state forest action plans. Innovative solutions are necessary to ensure the material generated through treatments is effectively moved to wood utilization facilities.

FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

Funding Availability

The Forest Service plans to award a total of up to \$23 million through this NOFO.

SAM.gov Registration

All applicants must have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) with the System for Award Management (SAM.gov) and a full, active registration with SAM.gov at the time of application submission. The government-wide web-based system, SAM.gov, supports federal contracts, grants, and payment. To expedite and streamline the grant process and distribution of payments, funding may be awarded to a Grant Administrator(s) who then oversee(s) and distribute(s) funding for the selected proposals and/or projects. Include a copy of your current SAM.gov registration with your application.

Match Contribution

The HFTA program requires a 50 percent non-federal match to requested proposal funding, which must be directly associated with execution of the awarded project(s). For example, a proposal for \$100,000 in federal HFTA funding requires a minimum of \$50,000 in non-federal match, which totals an overall project cost of \$150,000. Non-federal match amounts, justification, and origin source (e.g. your organization, partner's organization etc.) per project should be included in the proposal. Please see attached Frequently Asked Questions document for examples of eligible matching expenses.

Note: If your project does not provide a 50% match, it is possible for your project to be selected but only by reducing the awarded amount to ensure the required 50% match is achieved.

Project Performance Period

Awarded projects are expected to be implemented and completed within two full contract or agreement operating seasons. An extension may be approved with adequate justification. Successful award of a grant does not qualify a recipient for an extension on an existing Forest Service timber contract or stewardship agreement.

Reporting Requirements

Financial reports and narrative progress reports must be submitted quarterly. Reports are due within 30 days after the end of the reporting period. Timely submittal of financial and progress reports for each award is required. Payments cannot be processed until missing reports are received and approved. Progress reports should highlight direct quantitative and qualitative investment activities and outcomes and include illustrative impact stories. Geospatial data files and/or maps that outline the project area and any other relevant data will be required as part of regular reporting. Successful projects will be outcome oriented and have measurable outputs and impacts (e.g. acres benefitted and green tons and MBF (thousand board feet)) removed.

ELIGIBILITY

To apply for this grant program, an entity must have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and a full, active registration with SAM.gov at time of application submission.

Note: SAM.gov registration can take 10-15 business days, so organizations are encouraged to register as early as possible.

Who Can Apply

The following entities are eligible to submit a project proposal:

- For-Profit Entities
- Non-Profit Entities
- U.S. State Governments
- U.S. Local Governments
- Tribal Entities
- Education Institutions

Eligible Lands

Project proposals must occur on, or demonstrate direct benefit to, National Forest System Lands.

Geographic Prioritization

Applications will be evaluated and given priority based on benefits to NFS lands within Very High or High Wildfire Hazard Potential areas and/or project areas identified in state forest action plans. Projects not within Very High or High Wildfire Hazard Potential Areas are also eligible but may not be as highly prioritized. [Emergency Situation Designation Map](#)

Eligible Expenses and Match

The intent of the federal funding and eligible match is strictly to pay for transportation costs and direct costs associated with transportation. Eligible expenses authorized for grants and qualifying match under this program are limited to the list below:

- Transportation of forest products including logs, roundwood, chips, biomass, and other restoration byproducts from authorized projects to facilities for use in wood products and/or wood energy. Transportation mode includes but is not limited to rail, trucking, barge, and combinations of more than one mode.
- Loading and offloading of wood materials.
- Costs associated with woodyards, loading facilities, scales, custom chipping, and other items related to timber transport.
- Debarking for the purpose of preventing spread of bark-dwelling insects to quarantined areas or other areas where responsible officials provide rationale and maps explaining their concerns.
- Modification of equipment directly associated with transportation of materials included in the grant to facilitate efficient transport of wood products
- Leasing of mobile equipment (does not include “lease to own”).

Expenses incurred prior to award execution are not authorized for reimbursement. Eligible match may be incurred up to 3 months prior to grant award execution. For example, if an award is executed on 12/1/25, then eligible match may incur beginning 9/1/25.

Ineligible Uses of Grant Funds

Grant funds, in general, cannot be used for any expenses that are NOT directly related to the transportation of materials included in the grant proposal. The following are ineligible uses:

- New construction and capital improvements including facilities, infrastructure, roads, buildings, culverts, and boardwalks.
- Stumpage or timber purchases
- Costs associated with logging activities including cutting, skidding and decking costs.
- Costs already covered or included in existing contracts or agreements, e.g. a timber sale contract requires the removal of biomass from project area, therefore, costs associated with moving this material to the appraised location are not eligible.
- Fees associated with memberships to organizations, cooperatives, or entities.
- Land acquisition (conservation easement and fee simple) projects.
- Small business start-up funding.
- Equipment purchases
 - Equipment rental should be considered as an alternative. Equipment is defined as an article of nonexpendable, tangible personal property having a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more per unit.
- Lobbying, litigation, or political advocacy.
- Initial resources to capitalize a revolving fund, defined as a pool of capital that can be loaned and replenished as a borrower pays back a lender.
- Profit is not an allowable expense as specified in the Uniform Guidance (2 CFR 200), with

which all grant recipients must comply.

APPLICATION SUBMISSION

There is no standard application template to download, however, applications must be submitted as a Word or PDF document and include the required content described below.

Note: The Forest Service may choose not to consider applications that fail to comply with the required content and page limits, or those that are incomplete.

Application Documents

Each page must be numbered and have one-inch margins. The text of the project narrative should be single spaced and typed in a standard typeface (e.g., Times New Roman, Arial, Calibri) with no smaller than 12-point font. To be considered for funding under this opportunity, an application must contain the following required information:

1. Cover Page
2. Proposal and/or project Narrative(s) - Separate narratives are required for each project – limited to maximum of 2 pages per project
3. Detailed Budget or Standard Form SF-424A – a summary budget as well as separate budgets are needed if more than one project is included in the application. [SF424A](#)
4. Budget Narrative
5. Match Verification
6. Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) (if applicable)
7. Letter(s) of Collaboration (if applicable)
8. *Note:* For the application an SF-424 (standard form) [SF424](#) is optional, however, this form will be needed for awarded grants.

Cover Page

The application cover page should include the following:

- **Title:** Provide a short title for this application. Use this title consistently on all submission communications and supplemental documents.
- **Applicant:** Provide the name of the main applicant organization and the current SAM.gov UEI applying for Federal funding, and all subsidiaries and/or affiliates. The applicant should have the same name that is registered in SAM.gov. Include a copy of the current SAM.gov registration.
- **Contact Information:** Provide the name, title, address, phone number, and email address for the primary contact for the application.
- **National Forest(s):** List the national forest(s) that your projects are located on. For projects off NFS lands, list the national forest(s) that will directly benefit from the project.
- **Project(s):** List all project(s) included in the application package. List the projects in priority order for funding.
- **Product Type:** Indicate the forest product type(s), total acres impacted for each project in the application and total amount(s) in green tons and estimated MBF by product type that you intend to transport with this grant.

- **Funding Requested and Match Provided:** Provide a brief overview of the funding request and how the match will be provided.

Application: Narrative

A single application may include a single or multiple projects, which would be attached in priority order. **Each project will include a narrative justifying the transportation incentive and a budget.** The project narrative for each individual project should not exceed two pages (excluding budget) and should include the components listed below.

1. **Project Name**
2. **National Forest(s) or National Forest(s) benefitted from the project**
3. **Product Type(s) proposed for transportation incentive**
4. **Project Problem Statement:** In fewer than 100 words, provide a summary of the project that includes transportation challenges, scope, location, key partners, and expected accomplishments.
5. **Alignment:** Explain how the project will result in moving additional hazardous fuels materials that would otherwise not be utilized if left unfunded.
6. **Incentive Justification:** In three sentences or less provide a justification for the incentive explaining the changed condition making the transportation and removal of the forest products unfeasible without the incentive, e.g. this material is Timber Subject to Agreement and is not currently included in the contract, due to mill closures, or haul distance has increased.
7. **Project Partners:** If applicable, provide the name(s) of other entities participating in the project and briefly describe their involvement and contributions to the project. List tribal involvement if applicable.
8. **Strategic Geographic Focus:** Describe the geography (or geographies) impacted and how the project aligns with lands rated as Very High or High Wildfire Hazard Potential, state forest action plans, and landscape scale conservation initiatives or other relevant strategies reflecting diverse stakeholder input and coordinated partner collaboration. [Emergency Situation Designation Map](#)
9. **Implementation Strategy/Methodology/Timeline:** Provide a detailed explanation of the proposed approach, methodology, and project schedule/timeline with goals/milestones and expected accomplishments.
10. **Benefits to Rural Communities:** If applicable, explain how your project will benefit rural communities.
11. **Match:** Demonstrate how 50 percent non-federal match will be met. If the match is being met in whole or part by a third party, include a signed letter from the entity stating the dollar amount of the financial commitment.
12. **Measurable Outcomes and Impact:** Describe how impact will be measured; explain the metrics and processes to determine acres treated and/or quantity of hazardous fuels removed. If aligning with an existing strategy or action plan, indicate how relevant metrics will be used and modeled. List acres treated/benefitted and volume (in green tons and MBF) estimated for removal with a breakdown by product type, if possible.

13. Map: Include a map for the project that doesn't count towards your two-page total.

Display the project location, location of appraised mill(s), and name and location(s) of all proposed alternative locations where material will be transported to. Include on the map the project location in relation to the key strategic geographic areas. If your organization does not have mapping capabilities, then a Google map with relevant information marked on it will be acceptable. This map does not count toward the 2-page/project limitation.

Note: see sample application <https://www.nwtf.org/content-hub/2025-hazardous-fuels-transportation-assistance-program>.

Application: Budget

Detailed Budget **(Includes all cost(s) directly related to this grant project.)**

Each application should include a detailed budget. Applications that include activities related to more than one project should include separate budgets for each project as well as one consolidated summary budget.

Project start and end dates should define the period during which all proposed work is accomplished, and all requested funds and match are spent. Match may be eligible to start three months prior to award execution date. All existing contract terms apply including sale expiration.

Budget categories include the following:

- **Contractual** (e.g., contract for services like hauling, equipment rental)
- **Personnel** (actual cost).
 - *Note:* Fringe benefits should be identified separately from salary. No other expenses (e.g., fees, benefits) can be included in "Personnel" beyond direct compensation to individuals for time worked. These personnel costs are only allowable for the portion of time directly associated with the transportation of materials related to this grant.
- **Fringe benefits.**
- **Equipment rental/leasing costs.** Equipment rental/leasing costs are only allowable for the portion directly related to the transportation of materials related to this grant.
- **Supplies** (tangible personal property other than equipment).
- **Other.** Explain these costs in the Budget Narrative
- **Indirect costs**

Note: Costs currently included within existing timber sales, contracts and agreements cannot be requested in this grant application.

Budget Narrative

Explain and justify all requested budget items/costs. List, in detail, how the totals on the budget were determined and demonstrate a clear connection between costs and the proposed project activities as they directly relate to the transportation of material (provide this for each

project if submitting multiple projects within one application). For personnel salary costs, include the base-line salary figures and the estimates of the time to be directly charged to the project and for transportation of products. Describe any item that under the applicable Federal cost principles requires the agency's approval and estimate its cost.

Indirect Costs

An applicant who will have indirect costs or will administer multiple contracts with different contract holders may elect to assess indirect costs against this award following the direction at 2 CFR 200.414. If the applicant has a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA), the NICRA rate can be used, and a copy of the NICRA must be submitted with the proposal. In the absence of a NICRA, an applicant may elect to use the de minimis rate of 15% applied to modified total direct costs (see FAQ Document for additional information).

Other Required Supporting Documents (as applicable)

Letters of Collaboration

Include signed letters from each collaborating partner that will be actively involved in delivery of proposed project activities, including descriptions of intent and capacity to fulfill intended roles and responsibilities.

NFS Contract or Agreement or Wood Supply Agreement

For each project include the applicable NFS contract/agreement or wood supply agreement.

Match Verification

Include signed support letter(s) or other form of verification, if applicable, by financial institution of record or a third-party identifying match commitment

EVALUATION CRITERIA

All applications will be screened for relevance, accuracy, completeness and compliance.

- **Initial Project Review:**

- Each project will receive an initial review to determine if it is eligible for the grant. Eligibility will be determined by the following factors:
 - Active SAM.gov number,
 - Project clearly demonstrates a changed condition related to the need for a transportation incentive,
 - Project is on NFS lands or clearly shows a spatial and temporal relationship/benefit to NFS lands and
 - Project has an existing NFS contract or agreement or there is a wood supply agreement.
- Projects determined to be **ineligible** during this initial review will receive a second review to validate the determination. **If ineligibility is confirmed, then the project will be dismissed from further consideration.**

- **Secondary Project Review:**

- All projects determined as **eligible** following the initial review will be rated on the following evaluation factors, with the “maximum points” for each factor listed:
 - Justification of transportation incentive – 20 points
 - Treatment of priority hazardous fuels (Very high/High Wildfire Potential areas, State Forest Action Plan) – 20 points, (see FAQs for scoring breakdown)
 - Acres impacted/benefitted, and volume transported in green tons and MBF – 15 points
 - Increases pace and scale of work benefiting National Forest System lands – 15 points
 - Wood material utilization infrastructure retention & benefit – 10 points
 - Cost effectiveness – 10 points
 - Readiness for implementation – 5 points
 - Benefit to rural communities – 5 points

The agency will also account for program portfolio balance (e.g., geographic location, entity type, scope of activities, and program beneficiaries) and past performance/awards in determining awards to be funded.

SUBMISSION INFORMATION

Applications are to be submitted via email to: NFSWOHFTA@usda.gov.

We recommend submitting your application package at least 24-48 hours prior to application deadline date to provide sufficient time to correct any potential technical issues that may impact the application submission.

CONTACT FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

For inquiries specific to the content of the NOFO requirements, contact the following shared inbox: NFSWOHFTA@usda.gov. The Forest Service will provide at least two Application Assistance Webinars to assist with specific questions and inquiries. If you would like to receive a direct invitation for these sessions, please reference our supporting partner’s website: <https://www.nwtf.org/content-hub/2025-hazardous-fuels-transportation-assistance-program>