

**USDA Forest Service, USDI National Park Service,
USDI Bureau of Indian Affairs, USDI Bureau of Land Management,
USDI Fish and Wildlife Service**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Federal wildland fire suppression agencies call for community assistance and wildland urban interface project proposals for Fiscal Year 2005

PORTLAND, December 5, 2003 – Communities in Oregon and Washington will benefit from a federal multi-agency community assistance program designed to reduce wildland fire threats and at the same time enhance local economies. The U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, Fish and Wildlife Service and Bureau of Indian Affairs have once again packaged Forest Service community grant programs and a Department of the Interior Wildland Urban Interface Fuels community assistance program as part of the National Fire Plan goals to mitigate wildland fire hazards.

The goal, say agency representatives, is to provide grants and assistance under the National Fire Plan using a “one-stop” approach that allows grant seekers to submit a single proposal, while letting the agencies match the request to the best available program.

For fiscal year 2005 grants, applications must be received by close of business on February 13, 2004. The agencies expect to award between \$6 and \$8 million for fiscal year 2005. A majority of money will go for proposals under \$250,000. Grants will be awarded after October 1, 2004 when fiscal year 2005 funds become available.

The four programs for proposals include wildland/urban interface fuels reduction, fuels utilization and marketing, education and prevention, and community planning for risk assessment and mitigation.

Each program has a different focus, but combined they increase interagency and community coordination and encourage grass-roots solutions to reduce wildland fire threats.

Some projects that could be funded include:

- Developing strategic community fire plans and hazardous fuel reduction plans;

- Conducting hazardous fuels reduction activities, including mechanical treatment and prescribed fire;
- Providing incentives, technical assistance and education programs to encourage reduction of hazardous fuels in fire-prone communities;
- Developing prevention and education programs focused on mitigating fire risk in the wildland/urban interface; and
- Expanding markets for the by-products of hazardous fuels reduction.

“This year we are encouraging applications from communities to develop and complete their fire hazard risk assessments and mitigation plans,” said Bonnie Wood, National Fire Plan Coordinator for Oregon and Washington. “Completion of these strategic plans is important for the community and land management agencies so that all are focused on the same priorities for fuels treatments.”

Proponents seeking funding for treatment of hazardous fuels are expected to have complete community mitigation plans – also called “fire plans” or “fire protection plans.”

More information on eligibility requirements and project evaluation criteria for the four programs, and the required grant application forms can be found on the Internet at <http://www.nwfireplan.gov/>.

All applications must be received electronically by February 13, 2004 at 5:00 p.m. Applications should be emailed to: Lauren_Maloney@or.blm.gov.

Proponents that do not have email access may submit their original application by mail to the following:

National Fire Plan Program
Bureau of Land Management
Fire and Aviation Management
PO Box 2965
Portland, OR 97208-2965
Attn: Lauren Maloney

Applications submitted by mail **must be received** by Wednesday, February 11th at 5:00 p.m. to allow adequate time for processing.