



# 2020-2021 California Climate Investments Fire Prevention Grants Frequently Asked Questions



## What are the Grant Request Limits?

- Total Grant Request: No Maximum Total Grant Request
- Equipment Limit: \$250,000
- Administrative Costs: 12%

## Is maintenance allowed on previously created Fuel Breaks?

Yes. Creation or maintenance of fuel breaks in strategic locations, as identified in CAL FIRE Unit Fire Plans, a Community Wildfire Protection Plan, or similar strategic planning document.

## How will projects be mapped?

Applicants will be required to map proposed grant locations. Awarded Grantees will be required to provide CAL FIRE Unit Staff with corresponding project data for California Management Activity Project Planning and Event Reporter (CalMAPPER).

## Are Fiscal Sponsor Fees allowed to be included in the grant total along with other costs and expenses?

Yes, as long as these costs are directly related to the grant project. The fees will be evaluated as part of the overall grant budget.

## What is the maximum allowable administrative or indirect charge?

The inclusion of an indirect or administrative charge is acceptable for these grant programs, but must not exceed 12% of the total amount of grant funds provided to the grantee. It is calculated as a percentage of direct charges (minus any funds for an equipment purchase). The 12% maximum of indirect cost, applies to all entities including University of California (UC) and California State University (CSU) entities. Documentation related to the determination of the grantee's indirect cost rate must be retained by the grantee for audit purposes.

## What is considered to be an in-kind contribution or matching?

Matching or in-kind contributions are any contribution to the project (financial, volunteer time, employee time [paid by another funding source], services funded by another source, etc.) that contribute to achievement of the deliverables spelled out in the Project Application. CAL FIRE resources may not be used as match (i.e. crew day value).

## **Would applying for two grants from different sources at the same time negate our application through the Fire Prevention Grant Program?**

Applying for both grant programs at the same time would not negate the application. However, it is expected that you would not enter into an additional grant contract award for the same activities of the same project. If portions of the project were split, grants could be obtained from different sources for the split portions, not to exceed 100% of the project value. Attempts to bill two grants for the same work within a project would likely result in legal action by the State against the applicant.

## **What are the rules regarding conducting grant work on private property?**

If the project will accomplish work on private property that is not owned by the grantee, the grantee must secure written permission prior to conducting work on that property. The land use agreements must be kept on file by the grantee and available for inspection by State personnel upon request.

## **Commercialization of forest products may occur as a part of work conducted during the grant. Since forest products income fluctuates, how can a potential grantee account for this during the application and grant phases of the project?**

If commercializing occurs as a part of the process, any revenue from timber products will have to offset operating expenses. It is recommended that you use the price of forest products at the time of application to generate an estimate for budgeting purposes and not to speculate on the future price of any forest products expected to be generated by project implementation. The income must be accounted for as a net zero gain in the project budget by the end of the project.

## **Will the grant pay for State Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) application fees or costs to have CEQA work completed?**

Yes. These items should be included in the budget worksheet for your project. Standard DFW fees for CEQA can be found at <https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/CEQA/Fees>.

## **The proposed Fire Prevention project includes a number of community outreach events. Can food be provided at these events and paid for by the grant?**

There is nothing that specifically precludes this. However, it would not be considered to be a good use of grant funds and is strongly discouraged.

## **May a CAL FIRE employee conduct initial CEQA work?**

When CEQA work is required, a RPF (Registered Professional Forester) or qualified environmental planner, not associated with CAL FIRE should be considered first to conduct work. CAL FIRE employees may conduct the initial CEQA work for a public agency sponsored project when the grantee contracts for CEQA services with a CAL FIRE Unit. CAL FIRE will serve as the lead agency for CEQA work for non-public entities. If you plan to use a CAL FIRE employee to conduct the CEQA or any work in the project, you should contact them before submitting the application to ensure they will be able to accommodate the additional workload. Please refer to the Fire Prevention Grant Program Procedural Guide for additional discussion of CAL FIRE's role in CEQA.

**In reading through the Fire Prevention Grant Program Procedural Guide, it states that a CEQA document may be required. Would the CAL FIRE “1038i, Forest Fire Prevention Exemption” satisfy the CEQA component since this document is supposed to be CEQA complaint?**

The California Forest Practice Rules Title 14CCR1038(I) Forest Fire Prevention Exemption will work provided you are in compliance with Public Resource Code (PRC) Section 4584(j), whereby harvesting is “limited to those trees that eliminate the vertical continuity of vegetative fuels and the horizontal continuity of tree crowns”, and; the proposed project is a forested area. Section 1038(I) would not be the appropriate CEQA document for modifying a non-forested environment. Refer to the California Climate Investments Fire Prevention Grant Program Procedural Guide, CEQA Compliance for alternatives. Grantees are advised to itemize the State Department of Fish and Wildlife fee, if any, when preparing budgets during the application phase.

**As a grantee, do we ever take possession of any funds?**

If your project is selected for funding there will be a mechanism for periodic reimbursement of the completed project work. Additionally, advanced payment of funds is allowed per the Advance Payment of Grant Funds (non-profits only) section in the California Climate Investments Fire Prevention Grant Program Procedural Guide.

**Can we use the OES Form 130 in place of the Board resolution?**

The OES form 130 will not work for the purpose of this grant. An approved action by the Board of Directors, specific to this project, will be required before entering into a contract with the State. This is not necessary for the Project Application phase but will be required prior to signing a grant award agreement. You may wish to include a note in your application that you are working on the Board approval requirement.

**May an applicant submit additional documents with their application (i.e. cover letter, letters of support from fire safe councils, county representatives, etc.)?**

Yes. We are interested in letters of support but they should be received by CAL FIRE by the grant application due date in order to be considered. They will help illustrate community support. Please reference the project tracking number within the document and utilize the appropriate document naming convention for the electronic files when possible.

**Is the Application Checklist and Agreement Checklist, found in Appendix D, required during the Application phase?**

Appendix D provides two distinct checklists. They are Application and Agreement. The Application Checklist is designed to help the applicant insure that they submit all required items for the Application phase only. The Agreement documents should not be submitted during the Application phase.

**Can the grantee purchase Fire Engines or Water Tenders?**

No. The Grantee can only purchase equipment utilized for Fire Prevention Activities not for Fire Suppression Activities. Examples of this may include but are not limited to Chippers and Masticators

**Will this program pay for structural improvements to habitable structures in the WUI?**

No. The Fire Prevention Grants program is not intended to pay for structural improvements such as but not limited to ember changing vents, roof replacements and fire resistive fencing.