

Southeast FireMap—Scoping Phase

The U.S. Endowment for Forestry and Communities (Endowment) seeks proposals for the scoping phase of a newly proposed mapping effort for prescribed burns and wildfires in the Southeastern U.S. (SEFireMap). Funding for this project is contingent upon an approved Cooperative Agreement between the Endowment and USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), which is providing initial funding for this undertaking.

An improved, cohesive system to track both prescribed burns and wildfire activity on public and private lands will serve as a critical decision support tool to maximize the effectiveness of fire management practices. This will help NRCS and its public and private partners achieve their varied objectives such as keeping working lands working, restoring the longleaf pine ecosystem, supporting the Department of Defense testing and training mission, conserving listed and at-risk species, managing for wildfire risk, and minimizing the need for regulation to conserve species.

This opportunity closes August 9, 2019 at 5:00 p.m. Eastern.

Purpose of the Scoping Phase

The purpose of the Scoping Phase is to provide the background, specifications, and recommendations necessary for an entity to build and maintain the SEFireMap spatial database (a separate RFP will be issued to develop the SEFireMap database). A thorough assessment of existing fire mapping systems and current and potential new technologies should result in recommendations that maximize opportunities to learn from and build upon similar fire mapping efforts, new technologies or approaches used in the Southeast or elsewhere. Aligning efforts where appropriate will help ensure that the SEFireMap is a cohesive, simple, effective, cutting-edge system.

Deliverables resulting from the Scoping Phase should include:

- 1) Up to 8 meetings, workshops, webinars or conference calls to convene partners and experts to discuss broadly the current data collection, technologies and/or mapping being conducted in the Southeast and elsewhere, with at least two such events focused outside the Southeast;
- 2) A summary report from each of the above events due within 1 week of the event;
- 3) A list with moderate detail describing the existing relevant mapping efforts, data collection and/or technologies reviewed as part of this Scoping Phase, including a brief assessment of their strengths and weaknesses as it pertains to the end-user (scale, coverage, accessibility, format, interface, etc.), and a contact person for each;
- 4) Clear, detailed recommendations for building a scalable SEFireMap database that depicts fire occurrences in the Southeastern U.S. at various landscape scales through a web interface that supports simple queries, reports and downloads as either Excel spreadsheets, pdf(s) or shapefile(s). Recommendations will include how to expand the SEFireMap to help ensure seamless fire planning at larger geographies of the U.S. (especially Western states, if there is interest in doing so);
- 5) An approximate cost range for developing the SEFireMap as described above;
- 6) Participation, as needed but at least bi-monthly, in conference calls or online meetings with the Technical Oversight Team convened to lead this project;
- 7) One in-person meeting of the Technical Oversight Team at the end of this project to discuss findings and final recommendations;

- 8) Status briefings, as needed and on request, for the Endowment or the Technical Oversight Team Coordinator to support their need to keep partners updated on the status of the Scoping Phase.

At a minimum, the Scoping Phase should include a full assessment of existing datasets, spatial information, modeling, tools, and approaches currently being used on a regional or national basis, for fire mapping and related activities. In 2018, the Southeast Regional Partnership for Planning & Sustainability (SERPPAS) Good Map committee conducted an assessment (https://serppas.org/media/2729/the-serppas-good-map_white-paper_last-edit_3-27-2019.pdf) within the Southeast and identified several tools that could contribute to the SEFireMap. A more in-depth, national assessment is needed to optimize decision-making, use of funds, and the utility of the SEFireMap both locally and as a model for potential use in other areas of the country. A primary goal is to ensure awareness of similar efforts in other regions of the country as well as availability of new technologies that may improve data collection, storage, and user-accessibility.

The Scoping Phase should include recommendations for how to expand the SEFireMap to help ensure seamless fire planning at larger geographies of the U.S. (especially Western states). The Scoping Phase contractor is encouraged to identify technologies, systems, and processes from other fire mapping projects and related activities that will result in a superior SEFireMap.

A Technical Oversight Team of relevant experts will help guide the Scoping Phase contractor. The Scoping Phase contractor will report directly to the Technical Oversight Team Coordinator. The Scoping Phase contractor may also be asked to communicate directly with the USDA Forest Service and other federal agencies, state forestry agencies, forestry associations, and others.

The Scoping Phase contractor will collaborate as needed with NRCS and/or its contractors to identify processes by which prescribed burns conducted using Farm Bill funds under the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) can be captured within the new SEFireMap. As the Farm Bill is the primary source of funding for prescribed burns on private lands, this is a critical action. Specific attention will be given to protecting Personally identifiable information (PII) of USDA program participants, as required by statute.

SE FireMap—Background

The SEFireMap project will be achieved through remote analysis of imaging data, supported by the collation of spatial data (when available) to document, track, and “ground-truth” actual fire activity. Creating a SE FireMap will allow USDA Programs, America’s Longleaf Restoration Initiative, SERPPAS and other partners to determine, for example, the status of and need for prescribed burns in priority areas as they exist or emerge, and then prioritize deployment of technical and financial support to those sites. Additionally, the SE FireMap will promote recovery of federal Endangered, Threatened, or at-risk species in the southeast and elsewhere, potentially reducing future needs for regulatory solutions. The SEFireMap platform will include a “dashboard” for regional, state and local decision-making and identification of relevant examples. With wildfire risk increasing, the importance of enhancing and expanding prescribed burn implementation is great, while both funding and fire crews are in short supply. The need for a reliable method to select priority geographies to manage natural resources and wildfire risk is imperative.

Questions?

Please contact Lucas Furman, The Longleaf Alliance, with technical questions associated with Scoping Phase requirements (Lucas@longleafalliance.org) and Peter Stangel (peter@usendowment.org; 404-915-2763) with questions about the application process.

2019 Process Schedule

Request for Proposals (RFP) Issued: July 3, 2019
Proposal Deadline: August 9, 2019 (5 p.m. Eastern)
Applicants notified: No later than week of August 26, 2019

Contractual agreements between the Endowment and subcontractors should be completed within two to four weeks after notification unless otherwise informed. It is anticipated that the subcontractor will begin work on the scoping phase as soon as possible.

Contracting

Successful applicants will enter into a contract for services with the Endowment, making them Endowment subcontractors. As a subcontractor of federal funds, subcontractors must comply with all federal regulations as described in [2CFR Part 200, Uniform Administrative Requirement, and Cost Principles](#).

Project Timeline

Work for this project should commence as soon as possible once the subcontract is in place. Work should conclude, and final reports submitted, no later than February 17, 2020.

Payment

Subcontractors will invoice the Endowment monthly or quarterly on a reimbursable basis. If required, an advance payment may be requested.

Proposal Evaluation

Proposals will be evaluated based on the applicant's ability to thoroughly evaluate current mapping systems and make logical and innovative recommendations for building the SEFireMap.

Eligible Applicants

Not-for-profit 501(c) (3) organizations, for-profit companies, tribes, intertribal consortia, interstates, state and local government agencies, and colleges and universities are eligible for funding. Unincorporated individuals are not eligible. The Endowment does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in any of its programs or activities.

DUNS and SAM

Subcontractors must provide a current Duns and Bradstreet (DUNS) number and be registered and up-to-date in the SAM.gov grantee registration system. Applicants should start this registration process as early as possible to avoid delays in contracting.

Funding Restrictions

Awards may not be used for lobbying, political advocacy, or litigation. Other limitations on allowable costs may be found at [2 CFR Part 200](#).

The purchase of equipment under this funding announcement must comply with the NRCS General Terms and Conditions as well as OMB Cost Principles. Subcontractors purchasing equipment or products with funds provided under this award are encouraged to use such funds to purchase only American-made equipment and products.

Indirect Rates

Information about the Endowment's Indirect Cost Policy can be found [here](#). Please contact Aleta Rogers (Aleta@usendowment.org), Grants and Contract Specialist.

Matching/Leveraging Fund

Matching or leveraged funds are not required but desirable. Match may include cash donations or non-federal in-kind contributions from third-parties and allowable costs incurred by the applicant during the project.

Matching funds should meet these criteria: verifiable from applicant records; not already considered as match to another federal award; necessary to complete project objectives; committed directly to the project and used within the project period (begins one year prior to the date your application was submitted); and [Allowable under OMB 2 CFR 200 Cost Principles](#).

Proposed match must be for projects directly related to the purposes of this RFP.

Proposal Submission

Proposal Assistance

Peter Stangel (peter@usendowment.org; 404-915-2763)

Electronic Proposal Submission

Please use the attached application form. Submit completed proposal via email to aleta@usendowment.org by August 9, 2019, at 5 p.m. Receipt of your application will be acknowledged within two business days.