

FHAC Listening Session	
3-Mar-21	
Long form responses from audience	
How have you generally found working with state agencies and their grants?	
	Payments are SLOWWWW
	awesome
	Agency = good; grant process very cumbersome
	Reimbursement turn around is slow
	Admin work is costly
	Application process is cumbersome for many of the groups. Payments are slow
	Excellent
	To much paperwork
	Applications have become much more time consuming for less funding due to COVID-19.
	Depends on the agency.
	some orgs have worked well - DNR. Recent changes at CSFS have really kick our butt and are frustrating
	Slow reimbursement.
	The contacts are great, the application process is very detailed
	Yes, slow payments. But we have great CSFS local partners to work with.
	Excellent working with state agencies, but definitely not with their grants. Very slow on reimbursements.
	CPW has been good. Application/implementation good. They were the fiscal agent.
	Pretty easy. BUT forest thinning is hard.
	It is difficult to do the Interagency agreement between two state agencies
	Challenging in regard to very detailed applications and slow payments and too much paperwork. Too much state skimming off the top
	Payment is very slow. Mapping requirements are asked that the software is not able to do. CSFS is really helpful in preparing grants and assessment
	Good applications, plenty of support, a range of eligible projects. In general a decent experience
	CSFS has been excellent to work with! They have stepped up their reimbursement time frames.
	Near impossible to get outreach funding
	Project development and planning takes time and resources and the expectation is that projects are 100% "shovel ready". This is not a great way to "build the pipeline". We need funding to compensate for time associated with project development.
	Applications and capacity to deal with grant paperwork
	CSU creams a lot off the top for CSFS and has historically been slow to reimburse. Everything is reimbursement based which is hard for getting work started. CDHSEM could get out unspent post-fire PDM to other areas of state sooner. Metrics weak
Have you run into challenges with the grants?	
If you had a magic wand and could change up grant programs, what would you do differently?	
	Common application forms
	Easier application,
	Move CSFS out of CSU and put it into DNR
	Smaller match.

	Quicker reimbursement times. Common application.
	Homeowner commitment requirements prior to application and 1 year delays of funding. How can we get commitments when funding is over a year away? Mid stream changes for invoicing, reimbursement...
	Dealing with matching fund requirements is challenging, especially with different timelines of grants. It is sometimes a chicken and egg situation.
	Offer multi-year grants to provide stability i projects that take 3 to 5 years. If you have a great history of completing work and reports, then a shorter application to continue the project.
	Simplify the forms.
	Funding for outreach and coordination, flexibility with private land owner commitments
	Make some drawdown v. reimbursable. Provide funds for capacity, not just acres.
	Showing private landowner commitment prior to having the grant approved
	CSFS holds a strong monopoly on USFS pass through dollars (State Fire Assistance). Let NGOs apply for the funding directly. More work could get accomplished on the ground- funding could flow directly to local place-based orgs.
	Ensure broad recognition exists that state agencies have constraints they cannot control - some are dictated by federal sponsors.
	Ditto on move CSFS out of CSU and put it under DNR.
	Keep in mind those folks who don't have the capacity and resources to compete for grants like some of the bigger communities
	As we build grant planning, application and management capacity, these grants get much easier to navigate. I would actual set up a wish box of shovel ready projects. Funding to assist with match and/or personnel would be very helpful.
	I would like to be able let the grant awarding agency pay invoices directly
	Grants are complicated because of the rules; requires so much tracking it requires a dedicated person, no one has staff enough to do it. We don't apply for grants because of this.
	Have more pay directly
	The CSFS monopoly over USDA pass through funds (mostly state and private forestry) would be changed and other organizations could apply directly for USDA dollars to put this work on the ground.
	Add sustained and increasing state funding with local match, with a focus and supports on capacity building to get social buy in and good projects shovel ready. \$6 million a year is only a start.
How have you found working with federal agencies and their grant programs following an award?	
	Cumbersome
	Overwhelming
	They have been good to work with on border projects. Good staff support.
	FEMA is insane
	Convolutd
	Bah! Application and administration are nightmares.
	Painful to follow all the requirements.
	Complex
	More work than one can imagine,multiple hoops to jump
	Micro managed
	The overhead burden is large. You have to win a big project to make it worthwhile.

	Very long and comprehensive process. Definitely need staff assist and knowledge to navigate compliance. Ultimately doable but a huge resource output.
	The process can be cumbersome, but generally the USFS tries to do the best they can considering the red tap.
	Hard
	I think FEMA is making great strides. Really LONG process! It's not worth for small \$ BUT it many organizations can't meet a larger non-fed match.
	Lots of timelines to track, sometimes federal partners are responsive and sometimes not
	Difficult - but if the dollar value is high enough - the return on investment is better than some of the state and state/federal pass through opportunities.
	Longer award agreements 5 years (!!) Ability to have pre-payments vs Reimbursements Have to comply with CFR We have a successful working relationship with our federal funders!
	Mixed... Easy Grants = Not Easy. Turn over in grants and compliance officers with USFS and BLM a challenge.
	Grants awarded seem to go to the same areas
	If you had a magic wand and could change up grant application processes, what would you do differently?
	different success metrics other than acres treated!
	Hire a grant writer if we only had the money.
	Simplify the process,
	Outcomes vs outputs, ie not just acres.
	Consider shared grant application formats - Colorado Combined Grant Application is an example.
	Simplify everything but not sure that is possible??
	Ditto on the metrics! There's more to this than acres.
	Use more "innovation grants" that allow new approaches to be tried. It can be hard to fit an idea into grant categories.
	Spread out the grants or prioritize where work needs done. Burning the grasslands (PSICC) is the epitome of using acres as the metric.
	Streamline NOFO. Hard to chase all components
	I would advocate that the programs like RMRI, influenced by \$\$ and often people removed from on-the-ground reality not take precedent.
	Have process streamlined for entities that proven successful admin and implementation. Level out the selection process to include smaller but effective areas.
	allow for alternatives in the application process (presentations, videos etc) instead of super long applications
	Make RFPs easier to navigate, measure outcomes, consider different reporting options
	Make grants available for economic impact studies for fires
	Clarify environmental requirements for federally funded on private land - what's disturbed, consistency in timelines, Adopt Shared Wildfire Risk Mitigation tool & provide support to integrate with state systems - Invest in what works, not just new
	Yes. As a Metropolitan District, we bank monies to apply as matching funds for many grants.
	Owner buy in for the work on the Front Range
	Have you found ways to blend pots of money from various sources?
	Yes - we do it daily!

	No, don't have time/staff to figure it out
	Yes private, state, federal
	We are very successful using these concepts. - Require owners to pay if they can - Do not offer programs for free.
	Not efficiently. Too much work.
	YES! Leveraging dollars. STATE \$\$ is a really, really critical component. There are several federal sources, but without state \$\$ you are at a disadvantage.
	Leveraging is "easy" if multiple funding options are available, and a barrier if funding is tight and takes a lot of time to align.
	Yes, in fact we do this as part of some matches. When they are covering mitigations of different areas or the range of HIZ zones.
	Yes but record keeping is a challenge
	Everyone wants local match! Streamlining back-end tracking systems and allowing in-kind match could help.
	Leverage all your resources
	Yes, it's different and time consuming every time
	yes in hopes that we're not just funding projects for wealthy second homeowners
	To be proven, but the combination of RMRI, CFRLP, and Southwest Wildfire Impact Fund, in SW CO< will hopefully be successful here.
	Yes, SRS TIII with owners funds, local with state or fed. Workshop on blending would be super
	Yes, it a necessity to get the amounts needed for the work
	Some opportunities with a few CWCB buckets up to 75%. That makes small local matches easier
	Water Funds as a strategy (downstream users pay upstream for nature based solutions for water security & other co-benefits)
	Money, rrgulations
	Terrain and land ownership.
In a few words, what limits your capacity to increase pace and scale of on the ground work?	
	Qualified_Workforce
	Bandwidth_of_key_people
	Personnel public_opinion
	We_need_more_staff
	Funding
	Expertise Staff
	funding
	Staff
	staff_time
	Community_understanding
	Leadership
	Time_to_plan Build_project
	Collaborative_Funding
	Local_govt_buy_in
	CAPACITY_FUNDING
	designated_personnel
	many_local_entities

foresters
funding
Personnel
lack_of_local_government
landowner_permission
limited_wood_processseors
Support_from_Partners
funding
Chasing_the_shiny_project
Property_owner_buy_in
Staff
Lack_of_USFS_staff
Funding
Time
lack_of_trained_burners
funding
Leadership Leadership Leadership
Staff
loggers
Restrictions_on_RX
Everyone_wants_to_plan
Capacity_Funding
Capacity_Funding
Public Awarness
biomass_as_energy_source
Capacity_Funding
workforce_training
Limited_wood_processors
Forestry_staff
Planning
Vision_Focus
Trust
Social_License
Communications_staff
Support_network_access
back_up_staff
BIOMASS_pipeline
social_buy_in
funding
qualified_personnel
grant_competition
lack_of_timber_operators cost_per_unit_ac
cost_per_unit_ac
Slash
Trained_staff
Risk_aversion
Prioritization

	Funding
	Landowner_change_or_2d_th
	Social_license_for_Rx
	Conservation_Corps_funds
How can FHAC or agencies help you improve your effectiveness?	
	Funding workshops
	Biomass utilization opportunities
	Funding for updating CWPP
	Funding workshops
	Have a statewide plan for implementation using the state action plan. Too many risk models...
	Grant workshops for underserved communities
	Acknowledge local work happens at the local level. Stop sending the "experts" to develop plans and tell, rather support us in our place and listen.
	Increase wood removal and processing resources. Grant writing, management, reporting support,
	Help navigate the landscape of multiple entities, programs, plans, funding sources, etc.
	Address the barriers of lack of staff resources to plan projects and increase acceptance of Rx burns.
	Inform legislators of the need for funding for outreach & collaboratives
	Support for mitigation is vastly underfunded and could save so much more than paying to fight it.
	Trainings: grant expertise capacity building. Integration of watershed and wildfire knowledge sets, competing with urban areas and water sources
	Support us, don't dictate work.
	Biomass utilization support, advocate at varied levels of govt for collaborative support (not just a pat on the back, finding and resources)! Place based groups are where the work gets done
	Incorporate THIS model (presentations/menti) in to future discussions!
	help us throw logos and egos out the door. we are in this together from the federal to the local level
	Specifically fund capacity. You have to have people to increase the pace and scale. Stop requiring such shovel ready projects OR allowing funding for project design
	Continue to write in Conservation Corps as encouraged partners in forest health project funding!
	Treat rx fire as an emergency - Support multi agency rx inclusion
	Can collaboratives and organizations "loan" qualified staff to each other?
	Push for changes to state legislation regarding qualifications associated with Rx fire to extend liability protections beyond the Rxb3 qualification.
	host these types of events more frequently
	Develop funding opportunities for collaboratives, home hardening, and invest in those orgs. who provide capacity to local workforce, FACO, COCO, CPWC, WIRE, SRFSN, WWPG, CFRI, FSG. Stop doing things that don't work well
	NEPA streamlining
	State Model WUI code, Require CWPP implementation or local mitigation investment for SFA \$, Fund programs for home hardening and Mitigation specialists, Gross negligence for burning, Fire Marshals not Sheriffs
Do you have suggestions or ideas for regulatory or legislative changes that could help increase work on the ground?	

	biomass as part of the renewable energy requirement
	Focus on science and data. Don't politicize.
	Change from full suppression to allow for fire like NN
	Create a bonding option that could provide mitigation and capacity increased funding. Perhaps revolving loan possibilities to fund landscape size projects across boundaries.
	FEDERAL: Allow NGOs to access USFS funding programs directly (Like State Fire Assistance).
	State statute that suppression is the only response to wildfire
	State-WUI development codes
	FEMA - NGOs must be eligible
	Emphasize headwaters conservation across the nation, open up other options for Work Corp or Forestry Work Programs.
	Increased flexibility for Cat Ex's for forest treatments, including Wilderness.
	Consistent State and Federal funding support for local collaboratives. Decisions built around the best available science.
	Regulations clog the process, revamp and trim regs.use science
	Support for rx fire, address private lands risk management and liability
	Many! 1. Apply a fee to homeowners insurance premiums for WUI homeowners to establish a statewide pool of funding to be used for prioritized risk reduction work and programs. 2. Reduce barriers associated with liability protections for Rx fire.
	Remind DFPC the state modules are for mitigation work. One comment I heard "suppression is mitigation"
	funding for workforce training
	FRWRM funding has a capacity building application- for EQUIPMENT. How about capacity building funding for actual capacity?!
	Combine DFPC and CSFS
	Develop mechanisms that allow non-fire strict entities (NGOs) to enter into agreements with DFPC.
	WUI codes are not cheap. Just paring down model is a task with many unintended consequences
	Create a certification program that homeowners can provide to insurers and title companies to show they are following good practices.
	Require a minimum percentage of state appropriated funds, associated with wildfire, to be focused on mitigation and recovery.
	Most treatments are landscape scale, most losses are in the WUI. Need funding
	How has a large scale fire in your area changed how/where you work?
	Increased interest in mitigation
	More planning needed. Public engagement increased and public push for more preparation wanted by local government.
	Yes, completely changed everything here. Now emphasizing All-Hazard focus. Much easier for a while to get ownership engaged as well.
	Increases interest and brings in more partners. Political will is high. Raises realization of need for post-fire recovery work and shifted landscape focus to consider fire and post-fire needs.
	Coping with the recovery and threat of increased runoff, mud slides, and such. We are continuing to do what we have been doing but added treating increased weeds and controlling erosion.
	Public interest increases for while, more people interested than we can help

	The home loss/ devastation really pointed to the importance of home hardening and ember resistance. Vegetation management matters, but so does home hardening. This ties to the different metrics needed other than acres.
	Planning for flooding in and below burn area
	Lots of engagement after a large fire! Interest in mitigation goes up, but sometimes resources stay the same. Thoughts on how to increase community resilience and thinking about who is at the table
	A lot of the local funding is being diverted to fire-related work so funding is less available for other water projects. Many coordination meetings - tough to find time to attend.
	While active fire seasons and smoke in the air can drive increases to interest, we have also seen a general increase and uptick in interest in this work without fire.
	Yes. Externally, good partnerships. Internally, same old thing. Chase white hat projects. Out fed agency plays mega millions.
	It seems that it's the usual, big interest right after and many elected officials promising big change but then dies off.
	Chaos. Plans trashed. Fatigue sets in. Flooding adds another layer of work.
	Sadly large fires make me really frustrated that people continue to waste time and money - We need to stop all the waste and get to work.
	Public doesn't understand difference between USFS and. CSFS
What questions could additional post-fire science research help you to answer?	
	Are bigger treatments better? For what values on the landscape?
	How can we document the outcome and benefit of thinning trees as it benefits the remaining trees?
	How have local place based organizations increase adaptation in Colorado? How much money have they raised and contributed to mitigation? How much money is moved to the ground vs. left in the office?
	Why do bureaucrats take so much time to support work getting done. Let's go!!!
	How does gamble oak understory impact SWE and sublimation? How can we better design monitoring programs that build in wildlife dynamics
	Are beavers the answer? How many? Where?
	Planning for transition of non-forest types. Combining forestry fuels work and conservation district interests. Including anyone who uses water in the treatment of water resources.
	The connection of warm-dry mix conifer and ponderosa treatment with the impact on water quantity. The complexity of Gamble oak in SW CO.
	Sorry, I try to mention beavers every time.
	How does wildfire mitigation/restoration affect quantity and quantity of stream flows and downstream water rights.
	The link between active forest management, in different ecosystems, and the annual hydrograph for downstream water resource users (including riverine ecosystems).
	Is there a sustainable business model for forest products. Biochar? Wood products? Using less plastic? Energy production?
	WiRe - showing that people are doing work, but risk levels assessments not necessarily reflecting that they are doing enough to protect their homes?
	Where do we have evacuation concerns?
	Can a carbon market support increased forestry?

	How much should we charge lower basin states for forestry work in Colorado?
	How could we shorten the time from the NRCS flooding recovery recommendations following fire and the time when funds are available to prevent loss of life and property -- took almost 2 years.
	Why is biochar not used more?
	Has timber become a liability?
	How did Ute, Comanche, and other native people's use fire in Colorado?
	Are there effective options for treating steep hillslopes?
	Post wildfire flooding impact ratings
	The increase in recreation pressure with the need to increase pace and scale of mitigation efforts.
	More historical studies on fire. USFS has 1909 atlases that show these.
	Bovine flatulence forever!
	Ditto on traditional fire use.
	If you can't afford to do it all, what should you do?