



Forest Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE



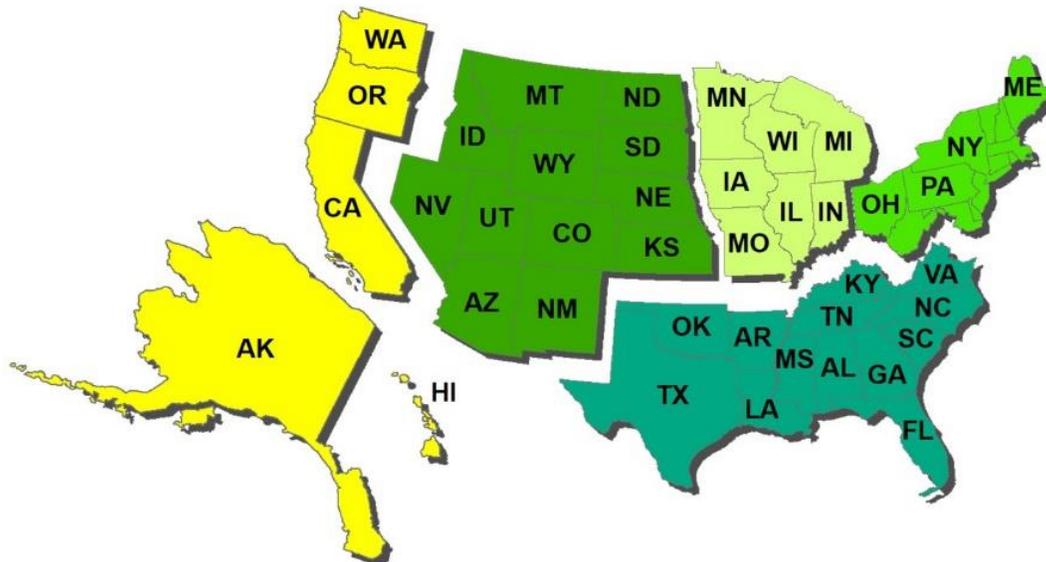
Forest Health Protection
Evaluation Monitoring Program

Proposal Instructions
and Guidelines

New and Renewal Proposal Instructions for FY 2023

Forest Health Monitoring (FHM) is a cooperative program that enables early detection and evaluation of changes in forest health conditions on all ownerships. The Evaluation Monitoring (EM) component of FHM is designed to evaluate undesirable changes in forest health. Projects funded through EM investigate the extent, severity, and/or causes of forest health problems.

Project Proposals for new and continuing projects should be submitted by **October 17, 2022** to the appropriate FHM Regional Manager: **Stephen Burr** for Northeast and North Central FHM Regions (stephen.burr@usda.gov), **Chris Asaro** for Southern FHM Region (christopher.asaro@usda.gov), **Joel Egan** for Interior West FHM Region (joel.egan@usda.gov), or **Karen Ripley** for West Coast FHM Region (karen.ripley@usda.gov). A fillable PDF for new project proposals, progress and final reports can be found at the [FHP Grants webpage](#). For best results, please use Adobe [Acrobat Reader DC](#) when filling out the forms on either PC or Mac machines. All proposals must be developed in close consultation with the Forest Service Forest Health Protection (FHP) staff designated as the FHP sponsor.



Regional FHM Managers are responsible for ranking projects from their respective regions and submitting up to five new projects and any progress reports for continuing or concluding projects, to **Eric Sprague**, FHM National Program Lead (eric.sprague@usda.gov) by **November 30, 2022**. Funding levels for the program depend on specific appropriations; therefore, funding available for EM may change based on final budget direction for FY 2023.

EM Project Competition:

The purpose of Evaluation Monitoring project is to investigate the extent, severity, and/or cause of forest health issues. Proposed projects should be 1-3 years in duration. Based on current analyses of forest health indicators tracked through the FHM program (see the [Forest Health Monitoring: National Status, Trends and Analysis Reports](#) and [State Highlights](#) and consult Regional FHM Program Managers about specific Regional forest health issues and concerns), we are particularly interested in project proposals dealing with the following priority issues:

- Shifts in fire regimes
- Extreme weather events including drought and high temperatures
- Tree mortality
- Insect and pathogen outbreaks
- Shifts in vegetation patterns including type conversions

Proposals must address priority issues in at least one of the following categories:

1. Advance climate informed monitoring through the integration of climate science, remote sensing technology, Forest Inventory and Analysis, and other datasets. For example:
 - a. Integrate satellite-based remote sensing into aerial and field surveys to broaden Forest Health Monitoring survey coverage for early detection and rapid response to climate driven insect and disease disturbances.
 - b. Integrate information on drought, rainfall, and temperature changes into the holistic monitoring and assessment of wildfires, insect outbreaks, forest blowdowns, and other disturbances.
 - c. Use information on climate and disturbances for early detection and rapid response to invasive species in the areas most at risk.
2. Effects of cross disturbance interactions (e.g., drought, pests, and fire) on forests and forest provided benefits (e.g. carbon uptake and storage and human health)
3. Short-term and early detection of disturbances and their effects including:
 - a. Extent, severity, and causes of priority issues (see above)
 - b. Deviations in patterns of vegetation dynamics
 - c. Deviations in expected levels of tree mortality and vigor

Proposals will be evaluated using the following criteria:

1. Focus on priority issues within identified categories.
2. Significance/impact of forest health issue.
3. Methods.
4. Budget.
5. Community Engagement.

More information on the ranking criteria can be found below.

General Requirements:

EM Proposals, Progress Reports and Final Reports **must** be submitted by using the forms found on the [Forest Health Protection Grants web page](#). Download the blank form, enter the appropriate information, and submit the saved document to the appropriate FHM Regional Coordinator. Proposals should address data availability. Any projects requiring access to Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA) plot coordinates should be discussed with Regional FIA work units or Tom Thompson (thomas.g.thompson@usda.gov) from the Spatial Data Services of FIA prior to submission of proposals.

The budget must include all overhead or other indirect costs requested to and pre-approved by the Region/Area, or to cooperating institutions. Projects on non-federal lands need to show non-federal contributions of 50% of the total project costs (i.e., a 1:1 match), but in certain circumstances and on a case-by-case basis, match may be reduced or waived by the Deputy Chief for State and Private Forestry. For multi-year projects, funding for each requested year is awarded in the year it is needed based on demonstrated progress (see “Continuing Proposals”, below). For more information, please review the [Forest Health Protection Grants Funding Information](#).

Continuing Proposals:

Previously funded, multi-year proposals from prior years will be given priority if the investigators have reported sufficient progress by submitting annual requests for continuation by October 17, 2022. Proposals for continued funding of multi-year projects should include a progress statement by submitting the completed EM Continuing Project Report form found on the [Forest Health Protection Grants web page](#). The budget requested for continuing years must not exceed that approved in the original proposal.

Reporting Requirements:

Final reporting of project results is to be presented in three formats: 1) Project details including final budget information are to be submitted by using the EM Final Report form found on the [Forest Health Protection Grants web page](#) 2) The FHM Management Team requires that results and progress reports for all national competition EM projects are summarized in posters presented at the biennial FHM Working Group meeting or posted on the FHM website. 3) Upon project completion, investigators will submit to the respective FHM Regional Managers a detailed final report, and a 2-5 page executive summary to be published as part of the annual [Forest Health Monitoring: National Status, Trends and Analysis Report](#).

Any publications resulting from these projects should acknowledge funding provided by the Forest Service Forest Health Monitoring program. Regardless of format, all Web content or communications materials produced, including text, audio, or video - must conform to applicable Section 508 standards to allow federal employees and members of the public with disabilities to access information that is comparable to information provided to persons without disabilities. See <https://www.section508.gov/> for more information. Please note that the FHM program is currently developing procedures for archiving data generated by EM projects.

Forest Health Monitoring – Evaluation Monitoring Project Rating Criteria

A total of five new Evaluation Monitoring Project Proposals may be submitted from each FHM Region. The forwarded projects will be selected by FHM Regional Managers who will have assembled a local team to review and rank them.

Forwarded projects will be reviewed by a National Review Team with representatives from the FHM Regions, FHP Washington DC Office, and other Forest Service programs. The Regional and National Review Teams will numerically rate forwarded projects for merit based on the following criteria. The number of projects funded will depend upon available funds, highest priority goes to Continuing Projects, then as many high rated projects will be funded as possible.

1. **Focus on priority issues within identified categories.** The priority issues and categories for the Evaluation Monitoring Program have been generated from analyses of FHM (Forest Health Monitoring) surveys, Aerial Detection and Survey (ADS), and/or FIA (Forest Inventory and Analysis) ground plot data; priority issues raised by Regional or National FHM Management Teams; Focus Group Resolutions from FHM Workgroup Meetings; or the USDA Forest Service Climate Adaption Plan.

To ensure that the EM Program is addressing the full range of forest health challenges, the review committee places emphasis on supporting a diversity of issues and categories.

2. **Significance/Impact of forest health issue.** This criterion addresses the relative significance or impact of the forest health issue addressed by the project. Factors to consider include biological, economic, and social impacts; geographic scope; and potential management implications. Proposals should clearly describe how results can be applied at broader scales.
3. **Methods.** This criterion addresses the degree to which proposed methods are based on sound science. Factors to consider include feasibility of proposed methods; the likelihood that the project will be successfully completed within the proposed timeframe; the track record of principal investigators.

4. **Budget.** This criterion addresses the cost and economic efficiency of the proposed project. Factors to consider include: the relative cost; economic efficiency; cost-sharing and leveraging of resources; and administrative assessments.
5. **Community Engagement.** Forest health challenges can have disproportionate impacts on Tribal Nations and disadvantaged communities. Proposals that can demonstrate substantial involvement or potential positive impact for disadvantaged communities or Tribal Nations in the implementation of their project will be given priority.

Additionally, those projects that advance environmental justice will be given priority. To identify locations or populations to integrate into work that advance this goal, please use either of the following tools:

- [Social Vulnerability Index](#)—Higher vulnerability scores receive more weight
- [U.S. EPA Environmental Justice Screening Tool](#): Proposals that meet one or more of the following indicators receive more weight:
 - >50% people of color
 - Low-income rate of >25%
 - Linguistically Isolated ratio >15%