

Hodel, (9th Circuit, 1986) and *Wisconsin Heritages, Inc. v. Harris*, 490 F. Supp. 1334, 1338 (E.D. Wis. 1980). The reason for this is to ensure that substantive comments and objections are made available to the Forest Service at a time when it can meaningfully consider them and respond to them in the final.

Dated: March 14, 1995.

William P. LeVere,

Deputy Forest Supervisor.

[FR Doc. 95-6974 Filed 3-21-95; 8:45 am]

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Timber Bridge Research Joint Venture Agreements; Solicitation of Applications and Application Guidelines

Program Description

Purpose

The Federal Highway Administration and the USDA, Forest Service, Forest Products Laboratory (FPL), are working cooperatively under Public Law 102-240, The Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) of 1991, on research for the development of wood in transportation structures.

The FPL is now inviting proposals for specific areas of the research under the authority of the Food Security Act of 1985 (7 U.S.C. 3318(b) and will award competitive Research Joint Venture Agreements for cooperative research related to wood in transportation structures. The specific research areas are stated within this announcement.

Eligibility

Proposals may be submitted by any Federal Agency, university, private business, non profit organization, or any research or engineering entity.

An applicant must qualify as a responsible applicant in order to be eligible for an award. To qualify as responsible, an applicant must meet the following standards:

(a) Adequate financial resources for performance, the necessary experience, organizational and technical qualifications, and facilities, or a firm commitment, arrangement, or ability to obtain same (including any to be obtained through subagreement (s)) or contracts;

(b) Ability to comply with the proposed or required completion schedule for the project;

(c) Adequate financial management system and audit procedures that provide efficient and effective accountability and control of all funds, property, and other assets;

(d) Satisfactory record of integrity, judgment, and performance, including, in particular, any prior performance under grants, agreements, and contracts from the Federal government; and

(e) Otherwise be qualified and eligible to receive an award under the applicable laws and regulations.

Available Funding

Available funding is shown under the specific research areas, below. The FPL will reimburse the cooperator not-to-exceed eighty percent (80%) of the total cost of the research. The proposing entity may contribute the indirect costs as its portion of the total cost of the research.

Indirect costs will be reimbursed to State Cooperative Institutions. State Cooperative Institutions are designated by the following:

(a) The Act of July 2, 1862 (7 U.S.C. 301 and the following), commonly known as the First Morrill Act;

(b) The Act of August 30, 1890 (7 U.S.C. 321 and the following), commonly known as the Second Morrill Act, including the Tuskegee Institute;

(c) The Act of March 2, 1887 (7 U.S.C. 361a and the following), commonly known as the Hatch Act of 1887;

(d) The Act of May 8, 1914 (7 U.S.C. 341 and the following), commonly known as the Smith-Lever Act;

(e) The Act of October 10, 1962 (16 U.S.C. 582a and the following), commonly known as the McIntire-Stennis Act of 1962; and

(f) Sections 1429 through 1439 (Animal Health and Disease Research), sections 1474 through 1483 (Rangeland Research) of Public Law 95-113, as amended by Public Law 97-98.

Definitions

(a) Grants, Agreements, and Licensing Officer means the Grants, Agreements, and Licensing Officer of the FPL and any other officer or employee of the Department of Agriculture to whom the authority involved may be delegated.

(b) Awarding Official means the Grants, Agreements, and Licensing Officer and any other officer or employee of the Department of Agriculture to whom the authority to issue or modify awards has been delegated.

(c) Budget Period means the interval of time (usually twelve months) into which the project period is divided for budgetary and reporting purposes.

(d) Department or USDA means the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

(e) Research Joint Venture Agreement means the award by the Grants, Agreements, and Licensing Officer or his/her designee to a cooperator to assist

in meeting the costs of conducting, for the benefit of the public, an identified project which is intended and designed to establish, discover, elucidate, or confirm information or the underlying mechanisms relating to a research problem area identified herein.

(f) Cooperator means the entity designated in the Research Joint Venture Agreement award document as the responsible legal entity to whom a Research Joint Venture Agreement is awarded.

(g) Methodology means the project approach to be followed to carry out the project.

(h) Peer Review Group means an assembled group of experts or consultants qualified by training and/or experience in particular scientific or technical field to give expert advice on the technical merit of grant applications in those fields.

(i) Principal Investigator means an individual who is responsible for the scientific and technical direction of the project, as designated by the cooperator in the application and approved by the Grants, Agreements, and Licensing Officer.

(j) Project means the particular activity within the scope of one or more of the research areas identified herein.

(k) Project Period means the total time approved by the Grants, Agreements, and Licensing Officer for conducting the proposed project as outlined in an approved application or the approved portions thereof.

(l) Research means any systematic study directed toward new or fuller knowledge of the subject field.

Areas: Proposals are currently being solicited in the following areas:

(a) Problem Area I: Copper Naphthenate Preservative for Bridge Applications. To develop a method for the separation and analysis of naphthenic acid components of copper naphthenate preservatives and to determine the relative efficacy of these components to decay fungi. Total estimated cost of the research: \$60,000; estimated Federal funding: \$48,000.

(b) Problem Area II: Development of Crash-Tested Bridge Railings. To develop and evaluate by full-scale crash testing two bridge railing systems, each including the bridge railing and the approach railing transition, for glued laminated timber bridges constructed of longitudinal girders and transverse deck panels. Total estimated cost of the research: \$242,500; estimated Federal funding: \$194,000.

(c) Problem Area III: Manual for Timber Bridge Inspection. To develop a comprehensive, stand-alone reference on the inspection of timber highway

bridges, including superstructures and substructures, which will present the knowledge, skills, and tools needed by bridge personnel to complete an effective inspection of timber bridges. Total estimated cost of the research: \$72,500; estimated Federal funding: \$58,000.

(d) Problem Area IV: Moisture Protection for Timber Members: To develop, refine, and/or evaluate a variety of coatings and coverings for protecting bridge members from moisture. Total estimated cost of the research: \$43,750; estimated Federal funding: \$35,000.

For additional information, contact John G. Bachhuber, USDA, Forest Service, Forest Products Laboratory, One Gifford Pinchot Drive, Madison, WI 53705-2398.

Proposal Preparation

Application Materials

An Application Kit and a copy of this solicitation will be made available upon request. The kit contains detailed information on each Problem Area, required forms, certifications, and instructions for preparing and submitting agreement applications. Copies of the Application Kit and this solicitation may be requested from: Joanne M. Bosch, Grants and Agreements, USDA, Forest Service, Forest Products Laboratory, One Gifford Pinchot Drive, Madison, WI 53705-2398, Telephone Number (608) 231-9205.

Proposal Submission

What to Submit

An original and five copies of a proposal must be submitted. Each copy of each proposal must be stapled securely in the upper left-hand corner (Do not bind). All copies of the proposal must be submitted in one package.

Where and When to Submit

Proposals must be received by the Grants, Agreements, and Licensing Officer by 2 p.m. June 2, 1995, and should be sent or delivered to the following address: Grants, Agreements, and Licensing Officer, USDA, Forest Service, Forest Products Laboratory, One Gifford Pinchot Drive, Madison, WI 53705-2398, Telephone (608) 231-9282.

Proposal Review, Evaluation, and Disposition

Proposal Review

All proposals received will be acknowledged. Prior to technical examination, a preliminary review will be made for responsiveness to this solicitation. Proposals that do not fall

within solicitation guidelines will be eliminated from competition; one copy will be returned to the applicant and the remainder will be destroyed. All accepted proposals will be reviewed by the Grants, Agreements, and Licensing Officer, qualified officers or employees of the Department, and by peer panel(s) of scientists or others who are recognized specialists in the areas covered by the proposals. Peer panels will be selected and organized to provide maximum expertise and objective judgment in the evaluation of proposals.

Evaluation Criteria

The peer review panel(s) will take into account the following criteria in carrying out its review of responsive proposals submitted:

- (a) Scientific merit of proposal.
 - (1) Conceptual adequacy of hypothesis;
 - (2) Clarity and delineation of objectives;
 - (3) Adequacy of the description of the undertaking and suitability and feasibility of methodology;
 - (4) Demonstration of feasibility through preliminary data;
 - (5) Probability of success of project;
 - (6) Novelty, uniqueness, and originality.
- (b) Qualifications of proposed project personnel and adequacy of facilities.
 - (1) Training and demonstrated awareness of previous and alternative approaches to the problem identified in the proposal and performance record and/or potential for future accomplishments;
 - (2) Time allocated for specific attainment of objectives;
 - (3) Institutional experience and competence in subject area; and
 - (4) Adequacy of available or obtainable support personnel, facilities, and instrumentation.

Proposal Disposition

When the peer review panel(s) has completed its deliberations, the USDA program staff, based on the recommendations of the peer review panel(s), will recommend to the Awarding Official that the project be (a) approved for support from currently available funds or (b) declined due to insufficient funds or unfavorable review.

USDA reserves the right to negotiate with the Principal Investigator and/or the submitting entity regarding project revisions (e.g., reduction in scope of work), funding level, or period of support prior to recommending any project for funding.

A proposal may be withdrawn at any time before a final funding decision is

made. One copy of each proposal that is not selected for funding (including those that are withdrawn) will be retained by USDA for one year, and remaining copies will be destroyed.

Supplementary Information

Grant Awards

Within the limit of funds available for such purpose, the awarding official shall make awards to those responsible eligible applicants whose proposals are judged most meritorious under the evaluation criteria and procedures set forth in this solicitation and application guidelines.

The date specified by the awarding officials as the beginning of the project period shall not be later than September 1, 1995.

All funds awarded shall be expended only for the purpose for which the funds are awarded in accordance with the approved application and budget, the terms and conditions of any resulting award, and the applicable Federal cost principles.

Obligation of the Federal Government

Neither the approval of any application nor the award of any Research Joint Venture Agreement commits or obligates the United States in any way to provide further support of a project or an portion thereof.

Other Conditions

The FPL may, with respect to any class of awards, impose additional conditions prior to or at the time of any award, when in the FPL's judgment, such conditions are necessary to assure or protect advancement of the approved project, the interests of the public, or the conservation of Research Joint Venture Agreement funds.

Done at Madison, WI, on March 13, 1995.

Susan L. LeVan,

Acting Director.

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Natural Resources Conservation Service

East Wenatchee Watershed, Washington; Notice

AGENCY: Natural Resources Conservation Service.

ACTION: Notice of deauthorization of federal funding.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to the Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act, Public Law 83-566, and the Natural Resources Conservation Service Guidelines (7 CFR 622), the Natural