**Custer County Request for Applications (RFA) for Wildfire Mitigation Planning and Projects**

The Custer County Board of County Commissioners is pleased to release this request for applications (RFA) to reduce the impact of wildfires on properties across the county. Funding for these projects is sourced from the Title 3 section of the Secure Rural Schools Act on an annual basis as authorized by congress. Per the Secure Rural Schools Act, Custer County is authorized to spend county funds on the following activities:

***(1) to carry out activities under the Firewise Communities program***

*(2) to reimburse the participating county for search and rescue and other emergency services, including firefighting and law enforcement patrols*

*(3) to cover training costs and equipment purchases directly related to the emergency services*

***(4) to develop and carry out community wildfire protection plans.***

While the use of Title 3 funding from Custer County is broad, this request for applications is for activities listed in the reauthorization act that carry out activities (1) under the Firewise Communities Program and activities that assist in the (2) development of and to carry out community wildfire protection plans.

**Funding availability**

Disbursement of these funds from the federal government to Custer County is annual, however the amounts of funding are variable from year to year. As such, the BOCC will award funding to eligible entities and projects addressing wildfire in Custer County under the following proportions:

* ½ of available funding for wildfire mitigation will be used for projects that implement mitigation activities
* ¼ of available funding will be used for Firewise Community activities
* ¼ of available funding will be used to support the development of Community Wildfire Protection Plans

**Timeline for Applications and Projects**

* Custer County will advertise in the paper of record this request for applications for 45 days ending on June 27, 2021.
* Applications must be submitted electronically to the Commissioner’s Administrative Assistant (boccadmin@custercountygov.com) by June 27, 2021 at 5 pm. Title the email “Title 3 Wildfire Mitigation Application” in the subject line.
* Successful applications will be awarded on June 30, 2021.
* All activities and final invoices must be submitted to the BOCC admin by September 15, 2021.

**Eligible Entities and Activities**

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* Homeowners Associations or similarly incorporated associations.
* 501 c 3 non-profits
* Individual landowners
* Businesses whose primary location(s) are situated in a forested area.
* Loosely organized homeowners who can demonstrate commitment to completing projects/programs and have created a partnership with any of the above type of eligible entities.

**Allowable Activities**

**Allowable activities fall into three categories Firewise Community activities, creating a Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP), and implementing a mitigation activity listed within a CWPP.**

1. Firewise activities include educational efforts that increase community wide knowledge about wildfire prevention. This could include educational workshops that cover land use planning, mitigation measures, supportive infrastructure, collaborative decision making and effective emergency response. For more information, please visit https://www.nfpa.org/Public-Education/Fire-causes-and-risks/Wildfire/Firewise-USA.
2. Creating or updating a Community Wildfire Protection Plan that brings together diverse local interests to discuss their mutual concerns for public safety, community sustainability and natural resources. The creation of CWPPs must engage appropriate local government and stakeholders. CWPPs must follow the minimum standards for a CWPP, found at (https://static.colostate.edu/client-files/csfs/pdfs/FINAL\_Revised\_CWPP\_Minimum\_Standards\_111309.pdf)
3. Implementing mitigation activities as described in a recent (no older than 5 years) CWPP. Projects must be identified in the CWPP and strive for defensible space and/or healthy forest mitigation.

**Cost Share Requirements:**

Custer County requires a minimum 25% cost match of the project. Custer County Title 3 funds will cover no more than 75% of the project costs. Applications will be evaluated on the contribution match to accomplish the work needed. Projects with a higher cash match will be rated higher.

Eligible cost share matches include:

* Volunteer labor (IRS rate of $25/hour)
* Specialized volunteer labor (such as project management, graphic design, ecological monitoring, forester, etc…)
* Matching funds from other grants or donations
* HOA members funds to share cost.

**Evaluation Criteria and application format:**

Applications will be evaluated on the completeness and thoroughness of the application. Applicants must address the following items in the order listed to achieve maximum points.

1. Introduction to eligible applicant, key stakeholders and point of contact for the project. (20 points)
   1. Eligible applicant definitions found on page 1-2.
   2. Name, contact information, and qualifications of applicant point of contact.
   3. What type(s) of projects you are applying for (Firewise, CWPP Planning, Mitigation Implementation).
   4. How will you assure the project is successfully completed?
2. Introduction to the mitigation need and the identification of the applicant’s plan to mitigate risk. (25 points)
   1. For Firewise Community activity applications, please describe the wildfire community preparedness activity you are hosting and the risk it addresses.
   2. For CWPP Planning Projects, please describe the need for this project in as much detail as possible. If it is an update of an existing CWPP, please detail why an update is necessary in addition to salient points of this update.
   3. For Mitigation Implementation projects please describe the risk(s) you plan to mitigate, actions to be performed to mitigate the risk and reference the CWPP for your area/HOA or similar.
3. How do you plan to execute the proposed project? (30 points)

All projects exceeding $500 of Title 3 funds from Custer County must follow Custer County’s procurement guidelines-http://www.custercountygov.com/pdf/PurchasingPolicy.pdf

Please use the following to describe how you will accomplish your project:

* + 1. Goal 1
    2. Task 1, Task 2, Task 3, etc…
    3. Outcome 1
    4. Goal 2
    5. Task 1, Task 2, Task 3, etc…
    6. Outcome 2

Be sure to identify project specific items in your goals/tasks/outcomes

* 1. Firewise Community Activities: Recruitment, advertisement, and project completion.
  2. CWPP Planning Projects: Please describe the process for identifying all the necessary CWPP requirements through the process. FEMA document on Creating a Community Wildfire Protection Plan: (https://www.usfa.fema.gov/downloads/pdf/publications/creating\_a\_cwpp.pdf).
  3. Mitigation Implementation Projects: Please describe how you plan to implement the mitigation plan, monitor progress, and close out the project.

1. Project Budget-Please see attached budget (excel file, pdf). (25 points)