



Colorado State Forest Service
5060 Campus Delivery
Colorado State University
Fort Collins, CO 80523-5060
970.491.6303; FAX 970.491.7736
<http://csfs.colostate.edu/>

NEWS

For Immediate Release

August 21, 2007

Contact: Katherine Timm

970.217.2874

katherine.timm@colostate.edu

Colorado State Forest Service Awards \$1 Million in Grant Funds for Community Forest Restoration and Water Protection Projects

FORT COLLINS, Colo. — The Colorado State Forest Service is awarding \$1 million in grants to fund 12 forest restoration projects that protect critical water supplies and address related forest health challenges in Colorado. The funds were made available through the Colorado Community Forest Restoration grant program established by the Colorado General Assembly through House Bill 07-1130.

“We are pleased with the number and scope of quality applications we received this year — the inaugural year of the program,” said Jeff Jahnke, director of the Colorado State Forest Service at Colorado State University. “These grant funds provide landowners and other stakeholders an opportunity to help address Colorado’s critical forest health challenges and protect water supplies.”

Projects funded by the grant include:

- Dalla Park Fire Mitigation, LaPlata County
- Forest and Community Protection Plan, Lake County
- Grand Junction Watershed and Fuel Reduction Program, Mesa County
- Grand Lake Beetle Kill Removal Project, Grand County
- Heil Valley Ranch 2008 Fuels Reduction–Unit 2, Boulder County
- Horsetooth Mountain Park Fuels Reduction, Larimer County
- Platte Canyon Fire/Forest Restoration and Water Protection Project, Park County
- Santa Fe Trails Ranch Fuel Break Project, Las Animas
- Straight Creek Forest Restoration Project, Summit County
- Summit County Hazardous Fuels Reduction Project, Summit County
- Upper South Platte Watershed Forest Health Initiative, Park and Teller counties
- West Vail and Lower Gore Creek Fuel Reduction Project, Eagle County

“The quality of the 46 applications we received was impressive and I’m confident that the projects selected for funding will have a positive impact on our state’s forests and watersheds,” said Paul Orbuch, assistant director of the Colorado Department of Natural Resources and chair of the technical advisory panel that reviewed the applications.

Joining Orbuch on the technical advisory panel were Jeff Kitchens, Bureau of Land Management; Susan Gray, U.S. Forest Service; Merrill Kauffman, Rocky Mountain Research Station (*emeritus*); Dan Binkley, Colorado State University; Tom Fry, The Wilderness Society; Tom Clark, Mayor of Kremmling; and Nancy Fishing, Colorado Timber Industry.

-more-

The purpose of the grant program is to encourage diverse local stakeholders to work together to develop and implement forest restoration projects that protect critical water supplies and address related forest health challenges such as wildfire risk reduction, community protection, ecological restoration and woody biomass utilization.

“Colorado’s forests and watersheds are among our state’s most important resources and we should do all we can to protect them,” said Colorado Sen. Joan Fitz-Gerald, a sponsor of HB-1130. “The number of grant applications received this year is an indication of the value that Coloradans place on our natural resources, and I’m proud that the 2007 Colorado General Assembly passed legislation to establish this program.”

“I was proud to introduce the legislation that set aside funding for projects to reduce the fire threats from dense stands of trees — especially those that have been killed by the ravaging bark beetle,” said Colorado Rep. Dan Gibbs. “I realize that the funding for these projects is just a drop-in-the-bucket in relation to the vast needs to reduce the fire threat from the bark beetle epidemic. However, it does show how the state can come to the table and leverage funding in partnership with local and federal funding to help address this issue. I will continue to work with my colleagues in the state legislature to continue this program — and expand it if possible.”

Landowners and others with the legal authority to contract for work on properties where projects were being proposed were eligible to apply for grants. Projects also must be associated with a completed Community Wildfire Protection Plan approved by the Colorado State Forest Service. Additional consideration was given to project proposals that involve organizations accredited by the Colorado Youth Corps Association. Nine of the 12 selected projects will involve Colorado Youth Corps organizations.

“Involving our youth in projects that benefit Colorado’s natural resources not only provides young people an opportunity to gain on-the-job skills, learn self-discipline and develop leadership skills, it fosters a deep appreciation for stewardship of the land,” said Jennifer Freeman, executive director of the Colorado Youth Corps Association. “As future leaders, it is important that our youth understand the value of caring for and protecting our natural resources, and we look forward to participating in projects funded by the Colorado Community Forest Restoration grant program.”

The state share of total project cost will not exceed 60 percent per project, and grant recipients are required to match up to 40 percent of the total project cost through cash, stumpage, in-kind contributions or federal funds.

“We’re excited about the opportunities these grants represent, and we thank the Colorado General Assembly for establishing the program and the Colorado Water Conservation Board for providing funding,” said Harris Sherman, executive director of the Colorado Department of Natural Resources. “This first go-round of grants has been impressive. I look forward to building on this success and moving rapidly to start critical on-the-ground work.”

###