



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

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Contact for Reporters: Ryan Lockwood

970.491.8970

ryan.lockwood@colostate.edu

Colorado State Forest Service Accepting Proposals to Protect Private Forestlands

FORT COLLINS, Colo. — The Colorado State Forest Service currently is accepting Forest Legacy Program proposals from Colorado landowners. The program authorizes the U.S. Forest Service, through the CSFS, to purchase permanent conservation easements on private land to prevent forestlands from being converted to non-forest uses. The application deadline is July 24 for federal fiscal year 2013 funding.

The purpose of the Colorado Forest Legacy Program is to protect environmentally important private forest areas that are threatened by conversion to non-forest uses. The program provides an opportunity for private landowners to retain ownership and management of their land, while receiving compensation for unrealized development rights. To date, the CSFS has received more than \$10.3 million in Forest Legacy funds that are protecting more than 12,000 acres of land from development throughout Colorado.

Private forestlands that support continued traditional forest uses and offer water resources, wildlife habitat and ecological, scenic, cultural or recreational value will receive priority. Landowners who elect to participate in the program are required to follow a land-management plan approved by the CSFS. Activities consistent with the management plan, including timber harvesting, grazing and recreation activities, are permitted.

“This program provides additional incentive to Colorado landowners to protect their private forestlands in perpetuity,” said Joe Duda, CSFS Forest Management Division supervisor. “By partnering with land conservation organizations, the Colorado State Forest Service is able to ensure that federal funding secures conservation easements on environmentally important forestlands for the benefit of future generations.”

The Colorado State Forest Stewardship Coordinating Committee will evaluate proposals and recommend to the state forester those that have sufficient merit to forward to the U.S. Forest Service to compete at a regional level; those selected at the regional level will compete nationally for funding.

Applications are available under the “Funding Opportunities” link at csfs.colostate.edu. Completed proposals must be submitted by mail and received no later than 5 p.m. July 24. For additional information, contact the CSFS at 970-491-6303.

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