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NEWS

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Grant Funds Available for Community Forest Restoration and Watershed Protection Projects

FORT COLLINS, Colo. — The Colorado State Forest Service is accepting proposals for the Colorado Community Forest Restoration and Watershed Protection Grant Program. All grant applications are due by 4 p.m., Dec. 2, and awards will be announced in January 2010.

The program was established by the 2007 Colorado General Assembly through the passage of House Bill 1130 and was continued through the passage of Senate Bill 071 in 2008. In 2009, House Bill 1199 was passed, authorizing continued funding for the program for up to \$1 million each of the next three years, based on availability of severance tax funds.

“This grant program provides an important opportunity for landowners and communities to compete for funds that will allow them to implement high-priority forest restoration projects that address critical forest health issues and help protect water supplies,” said Jeff Jahnke, state forester and director of the Colorado State Forest Service, an outreach agency of the Warner College of Natural Resources at Colorado State University. “In this era of tight budgets and increased funding needs, we want to thank the Colorado General Assembly and Gov. Ritter for recognizing the severity of our state’s forest health issues and investing in the future of Colorado’s natural resources, a mainstay of our state’s economy,” Jahnke said.

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

Landowners and others with the legal authority to contract for work on properties where projects are being proposed may apply for a grant. All projects must be associated with a completed Community Wildfire Protection Plan that has been approved by the Colorado State Forest Service. Additional consideration will be given to projects that involve the Colorado Youth Corps Association or another accredited Colorado Youth Corps.

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

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An interdisciplinary technical advisory panel convened by the Colorado State Forest Service, in partnership with the Colorado Department of Natural Resources, will review project applications. The Colorado state forester will make final selections and notify successful applicants.

Applications and additional information about the Colorado Community Forest Restoration and Watershed Protection Grant Program are available on the Colorado State Forest Service website at <http://csfs.colostate.edu>.

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