

Funding Opportunity Notice-Fiscal Year 2017
U.S. Department of Agriculture-Northwest Climate Hub

Open 11/2/2016-12/5/2016

General Information and Instructions:

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Deadline for Letter of Intent submission is December 5 2016 by 5pm PT.

1. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

Contingent upon available funds the Northwest Climate Hub requests proposals to support our mission to serve farms, forests and rangelands in a changing climate. An estimated amount of \$350,000 is available for approximately 5-10 projects. There are additional funds available (at least \$50,000) to fund one proposal that is designed to assist the NW Climate Hub in serving Alaska, such as efforts focused on Alaska meeting its food security needs under climate change. The Northwest Climate Hub encourages applicants to seek matching funds from other sources that augment and leverage funds made available to support proposals through this Request For Proposals (RFP).

2. SCHEDULE FOR SUBMISSION

Deadline for submission of the Letter of Interest.....	5 December 2016
Applicants notified and invited to submit Full Proposals	11 January 2017
Deadline for invited Full Proposals.....	28 February 2017
Applicants notified of Intent to Award*	30 May 2017

NOTE: Submission deadlines are by 5:00 PM Pacific Time for each date listed above.

**"Intent to Award" indicates the project has been selected for funding, pending completion of all administrative reviews and processing to complete formal awards.*

3. FUNDING OBJECTIVE

Funding will support work fulfilling the needs of **farmers, ranchers, and/or forest land owners to adapt and/or mitigate for climate change within Alaska, Idaho, Oregon and/or Washington**. Special consideration will be given to proposals that **also** focus on:

- 1) Resources that will aid in managing native or non-native pests and/or diseases in agricultural and/or forestry products;
- 2) Projects focused specifically on specialty crops, including, fruits and vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, horticulture, and nursery crops;
- 3) Engagement with livestock and forage production systems while simultaneously enhancing ecosystem services on working rangelands;
- 4) Work that focuses on mitigation efforts through establishing credible estimates and/or reducing greenhouse gases in cropping and/or livestock systems or enhancing carbon sequestration in farms, rangelands and/or forests;
- 5) Collaborative work with Tribal Nations to develop resources to address agriculture, forestry and/or rangelands needs; or
- 6) To better serve Idaho or Alaska projects in these areas will receive extra consideration.

4. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Eligible project activities will be in line with the mission of the USDA and the Northwest Climate Hub. The mission of the USDA Northwest Climate Hub is to develop and deliver science-based, region-specific information and technologies, with USDA agencies and partners, to agricultural and stakeholders on working landscapes that enable climate-informed decision-making, and to assist to the implementation of those decisions. This is in alignment with the USDA mission to provide leadership on food, agriculture, natural resources, rural development, nutrition, and related issues based on sound public policy, the best available science, and efficient management. The Northwest Climate Hub serves Alaska, Idaho, Oregon and Washington.

Eligible Applicants: Federal, State, Tribal, other public, and nonprofit or for-profit agencies, institutions, and organizations are eligible.

Eligible Activities: All projects must:

1. clearly identify an application or utility serving the mission of the Northwest Climate Hub
2. be applicable to some or all of the geographic range served by the Northwest Climate Hubs (Alaska, Idaho, Oregon and/or Washington),
3. address the Northwest Climate Hub goal of providing *leadership and a framework for linking science and management to address shared ecological, climate, social and economic issues related to climate change*, and
4. demonstrate a collaborative engagement with stakeholders or intended end-users of information/tools/resources during each stage of the project.

Northwest Climate Hub eligible project activities are:

1. **Science-driven**, generating science-based information and technologies with a high standard of quality and impartiality.
2. **Stakeholder-centered**, incorporating feedback from stakeholders on working landscapes throughout the stages of the project to collaboratively identify needs and gaps in information/tools/management resources. We seek to improve the success of our public, private, and tribal stakeholders by providing important and timely usable information and tools that meet their current and future needs.
3. **Cooperative**, striving for cooperation within USDA, across the federal government and among existing networks to minimize duplication and efficiently provide desired information, management practices, and decision tools to stakeholders.
4. **Efficient**, by having the right person, team or organization to do necessary tasks.

Information Synthesis / Tool development

Eligible project activities support information synthesis by putting available science in an accessible form that can be used in Hub tech-transfer and stakeholders on working landscapes. *Such projects will develop science-based tool(s) and then conduct the necessary outreach and education to inform stakeholders of the tool.* A clear statement of stakeholder needs and an explanation of how currently available tools and information services do not meet those needs must be made clear. New tool(s) should be developed by teams/individuals that are best able to accomplish the task and the development of new tools should demonstrate a stakeholder need and engagement throughout tool development. Tools of sufficient scientific quality and usefulness will be made available to stakeholders via the web and other technologies (e.g., smart phone apps, workshops). Information syntheses and tools will be subject to a review process conducted either by the

Northwest Regional Climate Hub, the US Forest Service or a scientific journal as appropriate for the product. Revision may be required.

Assessments

Eligible project activities include providing periodic regional assessments of risk and vulnerability to production sectors and rural economies, building on material provided under the National Climate Assessment. These assessments will identify primary risks to producers from increasing weather variability and a changing climate. They will include information on vulnerabilities of primary regional agricultural, ranching, and forestry commodities to climate change effects and will identify mitigation and adaptation strategies and their practical applicability given current and expected changes to the climate. Information syntheses and assessments will be subject to a review process conducted either by the Northwest Regional Climate Hub, the US Forest Service or a scientific journal as appropriate for the product, which may require product revision.

Education

Eligible project activities for education will facilitate the gathering of agriculture, rangelands, and/or forestry land stakeholders and technology transfer providers with climate scientists to pass along current, scientifically-based information on adaptation and mitigation tools and implementation of adaptation and mitigation strategies and plans. Education delivery will reach as many persons as possible in an effective format which can be classes, workshops and/or the web. Eligible projects will develop appropriate curriculum to meet stakeholder needs where resources are not currently available. Proposals should clearly be able to provide evidence as to the need for proposed educational resources.

Applied Research

Eligible project activities will communicate applied research to assist working farms, forests and/or rangelands in adaptation to and/or mitigation for climate change. Applied research can be conducted that will inform tools to be developed within the proposal. A clear statement of stakeholder needs and explain how currently available research does not meet stakeholder needs.

Ineligible Activities: Under this announcement, research projects with no clear tool, outreach, education or applied research component; construction projects; land acquisition; or projects whose principal purpose is general operating support will not be funded.

5. AWARD INFORMATION

Awards under this announcement will contribute to the mission of the Northwest Climate Hub in supporting the development of tools and resources to aid land managers of agricultural lands (i.e. farms, ranches, forests) in adapting to and mitigating climate change in Alaska, Idaho, Oregon and Washington. (See [3. Funding Objectives](#) & [4. Eligible Activities](#).) Approximately \$350,000 in funding is available from the Northwest Climate Hub for about 5-10 projects contingent upon available funds. In addition there is at least \$50,000 available for one project to assist the NW Climate Hub in serving Alaska, such as efforts focused on Alaska meeting its food security needs under climate change. The Northwest Climate Hub will be involved in projects under this funding opportunity. A minimum of \$10,000 and a maximum of \$80,000 may be awarded to individual projects. Proposals will be reviewed using the criteria in [3. Funding Objectives](#) & [4. Eligible Activities](#).

Applications will be submitted electronically: Project leads must submit a Letter of Intent to [Holly R. Prendeville \(hollyrprendeville@fs.fed.us\)](mailto:hollyrprendeville@fs.fed.us) using this [format \(Section 10\)](#). Following review of letters of intent, the Northwest Climate Hub will invite a subset of applicants to submit full proposals. The Northwest Climate Hub will consider full proposal submission by invitation only.

Awards issued to this announcement will result in various products or outcomes. *The Northwest Climate Hub reserves the right to make no awards under this announcement.* Funding amounts awarded for selected proposals are not explicit with final amounts awarded are at the discretion of the Northwest Climate Hub.

Anticipated Start and End Dates: Funded projects will begin in late summer 2017. Projects may be completed within one year of the start date and can take up to two years to complete. Future funding for the second year of proposed work is contingent upon available funds and assessment of whether year one objectives of the project were met in an efficient manner.

Partial Funding: The Northwest Climate Hub reserves the right to offer partial funding to submissions by funding discrete activities, or stages of proposed projects.

Award Instruments: The Northwest Climate Hub will provide funding to successful applicants utilizing an appropriate funding instrument. These include but are not limited to; Joint Venture Agreement, Cost Reimbursable Agreement, Challenge Cost Share, or Domestic Grant. Academic institutions in the Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit (CESU) are required to submit proposals through the appropriate CESU agreement (using the CESU indirect rate) unless they are a Land Grant or McEntire-Stennis. Those universities are not eligible to receive Indirect Costs (IDC). They can however use the unrecovered portion as match.

Acknowledgement: All awardees must appropriately acknowledge funding support in all products tools and deliverables as well as all website(s), publication(s), webinar(s), and tool(s) where the project/products are described and/or made available. An official USDA Northwest Climate Hub logo is available for acknowledgements.

Data/Results Delivery and Standards: During the full proposal submission process, project leads will be required to fill out a Data Management Plan (DMP) form, which requires leads to anticipate data products and their potential restrictions of use. This requirement applies to only full proposals and not letters of intent. Detailed instructions on the DMP requirement will be provided upon receiving an invitation to submit a full proposal. All funded proposals are subject to the U.S. federal open data policy.

Sensitivity of Tribal Knowledge: Knowledge and data held by indigenous people may be sensitive and tribes may not wish to publicly share information from studies that use a Traditional Ecological Knowledge approach. The Northwest Climate Hub respects the need for sensitivity and heightened awareness when working with tribal partners. Therefore, we will work with tribes at the beginning of projects to identify issues and develop a mutually agreed upon approach that meets tribal needs as well as providing reasonable access to non-sensitive data and products.

Confidentiality: Applicants may claim all or a portion of their project submission as confidential business information. Applicants must clearly mark submissions or portions thereof which they claim as confidential. If no claim of confidentiality is made, the Northwest Climate Hub is not responsible to maintain confidentiality. Note that any data produced under a Federal award is subject to the Freedom of Information Act.

Funding timetable

Technical and administrative reviews of projects will be completed by approximately May 2017. *However, delays in Congressional budget action may delay receipt of funds or even prevent project funding.* USFS Projects: Changes of allocation should be expected no sooner than June 1, 2017. If Congressional budget action is delayed, there will be a delay in funding of a minimum of 60 days after passage of a full-year budget. Non-USFS Projects: Joint venture agreements should be expected no sooner than September 2017. If Congressional budget action is delayed, there will be a delay of a minimum of 60 days after passage of a full year budget.

6. APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Letter of Intent submission: Please deliver your letter of intent in MS WORD or Portable Document Format (PDF) to Holly R. Prendeville (hollyrprendeville@fs.fed.us) using the format included in [Section 11](#).

Note: A Letter of Intent should be submitted first, no other forms are required until requested.

If a full proposal is invited, deliver your proposal in MS WORD or Portable Document Format (PDF) to Holly R. Prendeville (hollyrprendeville@fs.fed.us) using the format included in [Section 12](#).

7. SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

Letter of Intent Submission: Please deliver your letter of intent in MS WORD or Portable Document Format (PDF) in format noted in [Section 11](#) to Holly R. Prendeville (hollyrprendeville@fs.fed.us).

Full Proposal Submission: Please deliver your full proposal in MS WORD or Portable Document Format (PDF) in format noted in [Section 12](#) to Holly R. Prendeville (hollyrprendeville@fs.fed.us).

Deadline: Letters of interest are due by **5 December 2016 by 5pm Pacific Time**. Full proposals are due by **28 February 2017 by 5pm Pacific Time**. Late submissions will not be reviewed nor considered.

8. APPLICATION REVIEW

Project Letter of Intent will be ranked based on the following criteria:

- a. Responsiveness in addressing the eligible activities listed in [Section 3](#) and [Section 4](#) above and descriptions of clear project products and outcomes.
- b. Active engagement of stakeholders, decision-makers, and other partners in developing the project from the onset of the project as well as disseminating applicable results.
- c. Management significance (relevance/applicability to management needs). Ability of the project results to directly inform management decisions regarding natural and cultural resources within Alaska, Idaho, Oregon and/or Washington.

d. Likelihood of success, i.e., adequacy of the proposed technical approach to meet the project's goals and objectives.

Review and Selection Process: Recommendations for invitation of full proposal for funding consideration will be based on an evaluation of Letters of Intent against the Evaluation Criteria ([Section 3](#) and [Section 4](#)). The selection process will not penalize the applicant for submitting more than one letter of intent. Applications that leverage funding from other sources will receive extra consideration, though additional sources of funding is not a requirement.

Project Letters of Intent and full proposals will be evaluated through the following review processes:

- 1) Submissions will be screened by the Northwest Climate Hub Director and Coordinator upon receipt, for eligibility and conformance to the announcement provisions.
- 2) Steering committee members of the Northwest Climate Hub, or their representatives, will independently evaluate Letters of Intent against the evaluation criteria. Reviewers will abstain from participating in any review where a conflict of interest exists.
- 3) The compiled list of individual review evaluations and recommendations will be provided to the Northwest Climate Hub Steering Committee (or an Ad Hoc Steering Committee Work Group) to select letters of intent to request full proposals.
- 4) Full proposals will be sent to at least two subject matter experts to rank proposals against the evaluation criteria.

Invited Full proposals will be ranked based on the following criteria:

- 1) **Scientific merit and quality of proposed research:** Proposal objectives should be robust and clearly delineated. The proposal should demonstrate the use of science-based information and indicate how products serve Alaska, Idaho, Oregon and/or Washington. More narrowly focused proposals should describe how they can be scaled up or transferred to other areas served by the Northwest Climate Hub.
- 2) **Management significance:** Proposals should include a clear articulation of the resource management topic and decisions/management actions that are being considered. These will address important regional issues in farmlands, rangelands, and/or forests. Projects should be applicable to immediate, real-world planning and decision making needs as identified by resource management agencies in the relevant region. The proposal should demonstrate how the products and outcomes will allow stakeholders to incorporate climate change effects into their activities and investment decisions.
- 3) **Coordination and engagement with natural resource managers and other decision-makers:** Proposals *must* have stakeholder engagement and demonstrate significant capacity for developing and maintaining these relationships. Intended users of project products and outcomes (i.e., stakeholders on working landscapes) must be adequately engaged throughout the planning and administration of the proposed project. Proposals should include expressed strategies to inform and engage members of relevant communities and stakeholders to incorporate their knowledge and build understanding of climate change as it relates to making decisions on working landscapes. Where possible, the

project should be coordinated or leveraged with other resources (including leveraging additional resources and complementing/integrating with existing work of the study team members). The proposal should identify collaborative partnerships (University Extension, Federal, State, Tribal, or other) that will participate in the project; include any outreach components to disseminate research findings and information; plans for long-term hosting of web-based products; and evidence that products will be used to implement new management strategies or decision frameworks. Letters of support from at least one partner documenting management relevance/need and applicability of the proposed work are required.

4) **Study team qualifications:** The proposing team should have appropriate interest, high-level training, and qualifications for proposal products. The proposal should demonstrate, where appropriate, a commitment for end-to-end participation from an interdisciplinary, inclusive team (including resource managers, decision makers, and scientists from the necessary scientific and analytic disciplines). Reviewers will evaluate applied and relevant past work, breadth of skill/knowledge to successfully perform the proposed research, and the integration, leadership, governance, and organizational approach of the investigator or study team. Collaborative projects (multi-PI) should include clear delineation of project responsibility across the team. Where possible, the proposed team should demonstrate evidence of successfully completing similar work in the past.

5) **Budget and work plan:** Reviewers will evaluate the project budget and work plan in relation to the proposed level of work, expected benefits, complexity and/or scope of effort, and practicality and achievability of the proposed project. Work plans should present a detailed schedule of milestones, workshops, or meetings needed to engage key stakeholders and integrate climate science into a decision framework, and specific plans for communicating the process and outcomes to decision makers and stakeholders (e.g. outreach, demonstrations). Projects should build upon or complement existing work and capacity and/or coordinate funding with collaborating partners and leverage additional resources to carry out the proposed project. Consideration will be given to proposals leveraging other funding sources, providing matching funds, cost-sharing and providing in-kind support.

6) **Brief conversation with investigators and the NW Climate Hub staff:** for proposals that have made the short-list, investigators will provide Hub staff a brief project summary (<5 minutes) and review project plan and scope.

9. AWARD ADMINISTRATION

Award Notices: Following review of both Letters of Intent and full proposals applicants may be requested to revise project scope and/or budget before a final award can be made. Successful applicants will receive written notice. Recipient/cooperator and Forest Service must sign and date the instrument prior to execution. Once executed, all parties will receive an official copy and the funds will be made available for utilization. Applicants whose projects are not selected for funding will receive notice by e-mail within 30 days of the final review decision.

Recipient Payments: The Notice of Award document will include instructions specific to each recipient on how to request payment. If applicable, the instructions will detail any additional information/forms required and where to submit payment requests.

Recipient Financial and Performance Reporting Requirements:

Interim financial reports and performance reports may be required. Interim reports will be required no more frequently than quarterly, and no less frequently than annually. A final financial report and a final performance report will be required and are due within 90 calendar days of the end date of the award.

Performance reports must contain:

- a. Status Summary
- b. What has been accomplished to date? Please provide a comparison of actual accomplishments to the objectives established in the agreement narrative (quantify where possible)
- c. Any problems encountered? Explain delays or changed costs or conditions that significantly impair the ability to meet agreement objectives and timeliness. If necessary, please work with the Northwest Climate Hub Coordinator for an extension of the agreement period.
- d. Any changes that you plan to propose? Please work with the Northwest Climate Hub Coordinator to determine if a modification is needed (e.g., a change is needed to the objectives or financial plan).
- e. Briefly describe work to be performed during the next reporting period.
- f. Any other comments considered of importance but not discussed above.

The USDA Northwest Climate Hub will specify the performance reporting frequency applicable to the award in the Notice of Award document.

10. AGENCY CONTACTS

Beatrice Van Horne, USDA Northwest Climate Hub, Director
bvanhorne@fs.fed.us

Holly Prendeville, USDA Northwest Climate Hub, Coordinator
hollyrprendeville@fs.fed.us; Tel: 541-750-7300

11. LETTER OF INTENT FORMAT

Letter of intent is not to exceed three pages in length (i.e. Project objectives to Project products), use a font size no smaller than 10 point, use no less than half inch margins, and use the format provided below. If invited, a complete template will be sent to you to use for the full proposal.

USDA Northwest Climate Hub FY2017 Project Letter of Intent

Primary Activity Addressed by this Letter of Intent ([Section 3](#) and [Section 4](#))

Project Title: *(15 words or less)*

Lead Agency:

Principle Investigator:

Address:

Telephone:

Email:

Partnerships:

Additional Investigators:

Collaborative Partnerships:

Project Objective(s): Describe the project objective(s) in 100 words or less.

Management Objective: Describe the significance of the proposed work to the priorities of the Northwest Climate Hub and its stakeholders in 100 words or less.

Project Description: In 750 words or less, describe work to be done. Include a description of needs, methods, species impacted, geographic extent of proposed work, and expected outcomes.

Expected Project Length: Weeks or Months

Communication: Describe engagement of partners in the project development and dissemination of applicable results in 100 words or less.

Project Products: Describe the anticipated project products (databases, reports, outreach tools, presentations, etc.)

Product mock-up: Provide an example, outline, abstract of the product. For instance on-line tools present via a PowerPoint slide(s), information synthesis should provide a table of contents or outline.

Budget: Estimated Total Project Cost, including Estimated Match

Disclaimer regarding data sharing: Briefly describe any known restrictions on sharing of the data expected to be generated by this project.

12. INVITED FULL PROPOSAL FORMAT

Full proposal is not to exceed seven pages in length (i.e. Project objectives to Project products), use a font size no smaller than 10 point, use no less than half inch margins, and use the format provided. Templates for portions of the full proposal as noted below will be provided.

Project Title: (15 words or less)

Lead Agency:

Principle Investigator:

Address:

Telephone:

Email:

Partnerships:

Additional Investigators:

Collaborative Partnerships:

Project Objective(s): Describe project objective(s) and significance of proposed work to priorities of the Northwest Climate Hub and its stakeholders in 200 words or less.

Project Description: In 3000 words or less, describe work to be done. Include a description of needs, methods, species impacted, geographic extent of the proposed work, and expected outcomes.

Timeline: *Note timing of major events of project and timing of deliverables (e.g. data collection, analysis, writing report, delivery report; stakeholder input, website development, testing tool, tool in production, webinar(s) for tool education, present tool at conference, and/or workshops).*

Communication: *Describe engagement of partners in project development and dissemination of applicable results in 300 words or less.*

Project Products: *Describe anticipated project products (e.g. databases, reports, outreach tools, presentations, workshops, conferences, education modules, etc.)*

Product mock-up: *Provide an example, outline, abstract of the product. For instance on-line tools present via a PowerPoint slide(s), information synthesis should provide a table of contents or outline.*

Budget Form: *Complete the Budget Form (Excel document, template will be provided).*

Budget Narrative: *Explain and justify all requested budget items/costs. Detail how totals were determined and demonstrate a clear connection between costs and proposed project activities. For personnel salary costs, include base-line salary figures, benefits, and time estimates to be charged to the project. (Example provided.)*

Letter(s) of support from stakeholders: *Letters should describe the ways in which stakeholders will be part of the development of the project/product(s). Letters should note management relevance/need and applicability of the proposed work.*

Data Management Plan: *anticipate data products and their potential restrictions of use, how data will be managed and made accessible based on the U.S. federal open data policy. If applicable include a disclaimer regarding data sharing that briefly describe any known restrictions on sharing of the data expected to be generated by this project. (Template will be provided.)*

Before the full proposal comes forward for inclusion in a packet to be executed, ensure that the language clearly states Forest Service benefit/interest, COOP benefit/interest, and mutual benefit/interest. Additionally, makes sure the tasks for both parties are clearly defined.