



October 2023

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Wood Products Infrastructure Assistance Program (WPIA) – An Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act Financial Assistance Program for Facilities that Purchase and Process Byproducts from Ecosystem Restoration Projects.

Q1. What is the overall purpose of the WPIA program?

- Project funding is being made available to establish, reopen, retrofit, expand, or improve a sawmill or other wood-processing facility in close proximity to federal or Tribal lands that need ecosystem restoration and will generate byproducts from the restoration activities.

Q2. What does “close proximity” mean?

- We are asking applicants to report the maximum distance that material will be moved for processing. It is our expectation that most situations the material will be transported locally. No transportation subsidy will be allowed in this funding program.

Q3. How does the WPIA align with the USDA Forest Service’s [Confronting the Wildfire Crisis](#) strategy?

- Applicants seeking financial assistance from the WPIA are asked to identify if the facility is procuring material from the [Wildfire Crisis Strategy Landscapes](#), identified in the Confronting the Wildfire Crisis strategy and high priority landscapes.

Q4. Does the application need to meet all of the risk categories to be considered for funding?

- No. We have provided several options for applicant use to communicate their location’s risk and need of ecosystem restoration including: Wildfire Crisis Strategy Priority Landscapes, Top Ten Fireheds by State, Wildfirerisk.org, and the National Insect and Disease Risk Map.

Q5. Can other information sources be used to demonstrate that the project area is in high or very high need of ecosystem restoration including vegetation removal?

- Yes. If additional information is available demonstrating the high or very high need for ecological restoration in your project area, include a summary of the information and justification as an appendix.

Q6. How competitive would an application from the northeast, Midwest, or southeast be since catastrophic wildfires are not as prevalent in these areas of the United States?

- The USDA Forest Service recognizes that along with wildfires, invasive pest and diseases are impacting ecosystem health. All projects that utilize material to reduce wildfire, insect, or disease risk will be evaluated using the same selection criteria.

Q7. For the project selection criteria, what does the WPIA program prioritize?

- This program emphasizes 1) increasing the pace and scale of ecosystem restoration on federal or Tribal lands, 2) technical and financial project readiness, and 3) beneficial project impacts to disadvantaged communities.

Q8. Where can I find the application instructions for financial assistance through the WPIA program?

- Instructions for applying and the application form the WPIA program can be found at the USDA Forest Service [Wood Innovations Homepage](#) and [Grants.gov](#). The WPIA can be located in [Grants.gov](#) by searching for the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number 10.725.



- Q9.** What equipment purchases are eligible to be reimbursed through the WPIA?
- Stationary equipment is eligible. Procurement of mobile equipment (e.g., forklifts, skidders, feller bunchers, self-propelled in-woods chipping units) will NOT be funded under this funding opportunity. Use of federal funds to lease mobile equipment will be allowed if they are not lease-to-own arrangements. The purchase of mobile equipment will be allowed for Tribes.
- Q10.** Can funding from the WPIA program be used to reimburse the construction costs of a facility?
- No. Funds from the WPIA program cannot be used to reimburse construction costs or the purchase of construction materials. The incurred costs related to engineering, permitting, or designing a facility are reimbursable.
- Q11.** Are funds already spent eligible for reimbursement or use as match?
- No. Only project costs incurred after recipients are announced are eligible for reimbursement or match.
- Q12.** What are the funding match requirements for the WPIA?
- While match is not required, cooperator funding is a project selection criterion. Applicants are more likely to be funded if at least 25% of the total project cost originates from non-federal dollars. The preference for match is waived for projects demonstrating significant benefits to disadvantaged communities.
- Q13.** Does all the feedstock used by my wood processing facility need to come from Federal or Indian lands to qualify for this program?
- No. However, a significant percentage of facility feedstock does need to come from Federal or Indian lands either at the facility's current status or as a result of the proposed project.
- Q14.** I operate a facility that only procures woody biomass and sawlogs from private and state-owned forestlands. Am I eligible to apply for financial assistance through the WPIA program?
- No. The WPIA funding is only available to applicants that procure a high percentage of raw material volumes from federal or Indian lands. Applicants are advised to report the percentage of material that will come from federal and/or Indian Tribes.
- Q15.** I operate a facility that utilizes the sawmill waste or products from another facility. My facility does not procure material directly from forest or range lands. Is my facility eligible to apply for financial assistance through the WPIA program?
- Possibly. Only if the upstream facilities, supplying raw material to your facility, procures a high percentage of their raw material from ecosystem restoration projects on federal or Indian lands. Applicants are advised to report the percentage of material that will come from federal and/or Indian Tribes.