

West Region Wildfire Council
2017 Cost-Share Program
Frequently Asked Questions



Q: What is the WRWC Cost-Share Program?

A: The WRWC Cost-Share Program (CSP) is intended to provide financial support, as well as technical assistance, to aid individuals and communities with mitigating wildfire risk. Funding and/or technical assistance is available to assist with completing **defensible space** and/or **landscape-scale fuels reduction** projects. The program provides funding, on a reimbursement basis, to help off-set the costs of hiring a contractor to reduce hazardous fuels.

Q: Who is an eligible applicant?

A: Eligible applicants must be within Delta, Gunnison, Hinsdale, Montrose, Ouray and San Miguel counties. Applicants that live in an 'Extreme', 'Very High' or 'High' rated community identified in their respective county's Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP), will be given priority.

Q: How do I apply for cost share funding?

A: Fill out and return the West Region Wildfire Council's 2017 Cost-Share Program Application. You can obtain an application from your Mitigation and Education Coordinator or from www.COwildfire.org. After your Cost-Share Program Application is submitted you will need to coordinate with the Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS) or a natural resource professional to design your fuels reduction project and obtain contractor bids.

Q: I have returned my cost share application, what are the next steps?

A: The CSFS or your natural resource professional will provide a Map and Scope of Work (SOW) for your project. Your SOW explains exactly how and to what standard your project needs to be completed in order for you to receive your reimbursement. Additionally, the CSFS or natural resource professional will need to complete any necessary field work for your project. Contractor bids may be obtained once your natural resource professional provides these services.

Q: Are there additional costs not covered by the grant?

A: Consultation with CSFS or other natural resource professional to develop a Project Map, Scope of Work, complete field work, solicit and acquire bids, administer the project, and oversee contractor performance may be subject to additional service fees. Understand that these service fees are not eligible for cost-share reimbursement. (Please ask your consulting forester/natural resource professional about these service fees.)

Q. Do you have a list of contractors that do fuels mitigation work?

A: CSFS maintains a list of contractors. This list is available for distribution. For the majority of projects, CSFS will hold a "contractor showcase" to invite a group of contractors to see multiple projects on the same day. Please talk with your CSFS Forester to inquire about the possibility of including your project in a showcase. WRWC encourages participants to hold a contractor showcase, as they typically result in a more competitive bid price.

Q: How will I know if funding has been approved for my project?

A: When cost share funding is approved for your fuels reduction project the West Region Wildfire Council will send you an Award Agreement (an example Award Agreement will be provided with your 2017 Cost-Share Application). If your project is approved for cost share funding your award amount, the amount you will be responsible for, and your cost share percentage will be specifically outlined in your Award Agreement.

Q: What is the maximum award amount?

A: All projects will be reviewed individually to determine eligibility and cost-share funding amounts. The maximum cost-share award through this program cycle is 75%, whereby the West Region Wildfire Council would reimburse a maximum of 75% of the total cost for contracted mitigation services. In some cases, the funding award may be less than 75% of the total cost. The final award amount is based upon: (a) a comparison of the project cost to reasonably similar costs of recently completed projects in the area; (b) project details in the Scope of Work; and (c) and the chosen contractor's bid.

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Q: When can the work start on my fuels reduction project?

A: Prior to your contractor starting work on your project the West Region Wildfire Council needs a copy of your signed Award Agreement. By signing and returning your Award Agreement you are agreeing to program requirements and your awarded reimbursement amount.

Q: Can I apply for cost-share funding and do the work myself?

A: This program requires that you hire a contractor to complete the work as outlined in the project Scope of Work. With that said, any work that you do to aid the completion of your mitigation project should be documented using the "In-Kind Tracking Form". Any hours that you contribute to the completion of your project cannot be used as documentation of "matching funds". The In-Kind contribution will be utilized by the WRWC for our county, state and federal grant reporting purposes.

Q: How do I find out what my community's wildfire risk rating is?

A: Visit www.COwildfire.org. Click on the appropriate county under the CWPP tab and search the CWPP document for your community.

Q: To receive grant funding will I be required to do any additional wildfire mitigation activities?

A: Yes. Home ignitions during a wildfire are often times caused by ember showers and fire brands igniting flammable material within the Home Ignition Zone. Because of this the West Region Wildfire Council requires you to complete any applicable Home Ignition Zone Activities to receive your Cost-Share Reimbursement. These activities include moving firewood piles, mowing grasses, raking pine needles, and/or removing flammables from underneath elevated decking.

Q: When should I contact my selected contractor?

A: After you sign and return your Award Agreement, please call your selected contractor to schedule the work.

Q: When the project is complete, who pays the contractor?

A: This is a **reimbursement** program. Therefore you are responsible for paying the contractor in full. **STOP!! DO NOT** pay your contractor until a WRWC or CSFS representative has performed a final compliance inspection and has approved the work. We recommend, but do not require, that you have a written agreement with the contractor. Contract templates are available upon request.

Q: How long do I have to complete my project?

A: The completion deadline for your project will be highlighted in the Award Agreement. Typically funded projects must be completed within 90 days of receiving funding, though some projects are given a longer completion deadline depending upon circumstances. Please contact your WRWC representative if you feel that you need an extension on your project completion deadline.

Q: How quickly will I receive my reimbursement?

A: Once a WRWC or CSFS representative has completed a final project compliance inspection of the project and you submitted your final Reimbursement Request form, you can expect a check, sent to your mailing address, within 5-10 business days.

Q: Will I be required to do post project maintenance?

A: Yes. The West Region Wildfire Council expects you to make a 'good faith' effort to maintain your fuels reduction project. Overtime treated vegetation will regrow and your mitigated fire risk will return. By being proactive you can easily maintain your defensible space project. The heavy equipment and technical falling experience that your contractor needed to originally create your defensible space is not required for post project maintenance. A simple set of pruning shears, hand saw, weed whacker, or herbicide can remove regenerating or encroaching fuels. The West Region Wildfire Council to schedule a follow-up project maintenance site visit two years after the completion of your fuels reduction project to provide maintenance recommendations. WRWC will not require any reimbursement payments to be returned for post-project maintenance reasons.