

Application Process for Wallowa County Applicants for United States Forest Service Secure Rural Schools Act Title II Funds

Overview

Title II

In 2000, Congress passed the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self Determination Act¹, which includes funds under Title II: Special Projects on Federal Lands. Entities based in Wallowa County, Oregon are eligible for Title II funding for projects proposed within the county on the Wallowa-Whitman and the Umatilla national forests.

Applications from Wallowa County-based entities, including the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest's Wallowa Mountains Office, Umatilla National Forest's Pomeroy and Walla Walla districts, nonprofits, tribes and local government agencies, may be submitted for technical review by the Wallowa County Natural Advisory Technical Committee and ranking by Standing Committee prior to submission to the U.S. Forest Service. Recommendations from the Standing Committee are then be submitted to the Wallowa County Board of Commissioners. The Commissioners submit their final rankings and recommendations to the Northeast Oregon Forests Regional Advisory Committee for final approval or denial.

Eligible Projects

A project must meet one or more of the following to meet the intent of the legislation:

- Improves maintenance of existing infrastructure. [Sec. 2 (2)(A)(i)]
- Implements stewardship objectives that enhance forest ecosystems. [Sec. 2 (2)(A)(ii)]
- Restores and improves land health and water quality. [Sec. 2 (2)(A)(iii)]
- Improves cooperative relationships between people that use and care for Federal land and the agencies that manage Federal land [Sec. 2 (3)]

Applicants must select one or more of the following project types:

Road Maintenance [Sec. 2 (2)(C)(i)]		Trail Maintenance [Sec. 2 (2)(C)(i)]
Road Decommission/Obliteration [Sec. 2(2)(C)(i)]		Trail Obliteration [Sec. 2 (2)(C)(i)]
Soil Productivity Improvement [Sec. 2 (2)(C)(ii)]		Forest Health Improvement [Sec. 2 (2)(C)(iii)]
Watershed Restoration & Maintenance. [Sec. 2 (2)(C)(iv)]		Fish Habitat Restoration [Sec. 2 (2)(C)(v)]

¹Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000
Public Law 110-343 <https://www.congress.gov/bill/106th-congress/house-bill/2389>

Control of Noxious Weeds [Sec. 2 (2)(C)(vi)]		Wildlife Habitat Restoration [Sec. 2 (2)(C)(v)]
Reestablish Native Species [Sec. 2 (2)(C)(vii)]		Fuels Management/Prevention [Sec. 2 (2)(C)(iii)]
Other Infrastructure Maintenance [Sec. 2 (2)(C)(i)]		Conservation Education [Sec. 2 (3)]
Other Project Type [Sec. 2 (2)(C)]	(Specify)	

How to Apply

The process for Title II applications begins when the Wallowa-Whitman and/or Umatilla National Forest sends a press release indicating availability of funding. The Wallowa County Natural Resources director will send out the proposal form “Title II Project Submission Form - Northeast Oregon Forests Resource Advisory Committee” and proposal deadline date to the Wallowa County NRAC Tech and Standing Committee members via email. The Director will also advertise Title II application information and submission deadline in local media outlets and on the Wallowa County website. All applicants must submit proposals via email to the director or designated representative by the deadline indicated for County review.

Decision Making Process

After the proposal deadline, NRAC Tech Committee members will review all proposals for technical merit. Applicants will have an opportunity to present their proposals to the NRAC Tech Committee at its regularly scheduled monthly meeting. Each tech team member will review the proposals using their technical expertise for soundness of the project and provide feedback to the applicants to strengthen the proposals ahead of the NRAC Standing Committee’s review and ranking.

Members should consider the following criteria:

- 1) Nexus to Forest Service priorities. Yes- continue with following criteria. No- project invalid.
- 2) Is the proposed project technically sound?
- 3) Does the project actually address the issue identified in “Project Goals and Objectives.”
- 4) Clarity of project (i.e., can we understand the proposal)
- 5) Project type aligns with Wallowa County Natural Resource Management Plan.
- 6) Budget is reasonable for the proposed work.
- 7) Budget is complete with sufficient detail aligns with proposed activities.
- 8) NRAC representative will provide tech committee comments back to applicants allowing them to make changes ahead of Standing Committee review.
- 9) The Forest Service allows a pre-determined amount of money for Title II projects within Wallowa County on the Umatilla National Forest.

Following the NRAC Tech Committee review for technical merit, the applications will be reviewed and ranked by the Standing Committee at its regularly scheduled monthly meeting. The Standing Committee's recommendations are then be presented to the Wallowa County Board of Commissioners at one of its two regularly scheduled monthly meetings. The Commissioners will vote on which proposals to approve. They will then send a list of the approved proposals, the applications, and a cover letter to the Northeast Oregon Forest Resource Advisory Committee and the U.S. Forest Service RAC liaison(s).

The RAC has final say on proposals.

FAQs

- Historically funds were not been approved for on-going salary expenses from NRAC but are permitted for project management.
- The NRAC recommends grant application budgets show each line item in detail and a description how it will be used in the proposed project. Please give details in the sections provided for "Project Goals and Objectives".
- If your project is recommended to the RAC by the Wallowa County Commissioners, you will have an opportunity to do a short presentation to the RAC.
- It is recommended that non-Forest Service applicants have 20 percent non-federal match for their project at the time an agreement is made with the Forest Service to disburse funds.
- Applicants are encouraged to show matching funds on the Title II Project Submission Form; this shows the NRAC there is broader support for a project.
- The timeline for Title II funding is variable. Generally, the Forest Service will send a press release with application and deadline included. The NRAC will decide on local deadlines before Title II Applications are due to the RAC. Presentations will be made to the NRAC Tech Committee for technical merit. The NRAC Standing Committee will make recommendations to the Board of Commissioners prior to RAC deadline. After approval from the RAC, the applicant will work directly with the Forest Service to disburse funds.