



## ***Request for Proposals*** **Inyo National Forest**

### ***Introduction***

The National Forest Foundation (NFF), a private, nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization, chartered by Congress, engages America in community-based and national programs that promote the health and public enjoyment of the 193-million acre National Forest System, and administers private gifts of funds and land for the benefit of the National Forests. The NFF believes that communities should play a significant role in determining the future of National Forests and Grasslands. A common thread connecting all NFF program areas is an interest in action-oriented projects that enhance the viability of natural resources while considering benefits to, and the involvement of, surrounding communities.

The NFF has partnered with Mammoth Mountain to help maintain and enhance the quality of the Inyo National Forest and the experiences that visitors have there. By combining Federal funds with individual donations voluntarily made by guests at Mammoth Mountain, the NFF Ski Conservation Fund (SCF) is able to multiply the resources available to nonprofit partners to implement projects that directly benefit the Inyo National Forest.

For the SCF, the NFF will accept applications from nonprofit organizations working on or adjacent to the Inyo National Forest to implement action-oriented on-the-ground conservation projects and citizen-based monitoring projects that lead to implementation. All grants awarded through the SCF will require a non-Federal cash or documented in-kind match of at least 25% of the total award value. Weighted advantage will be given to proposals that leverage significant additional financial resources beyond the 25% minimum.

Funded projects must be completed within 12-months of the project award date, and final project reports must be received within one month of the project end date. Organizations that receive an award through the SCF may manage it concurrently with any other ongoing NFF conservation award.

### ***Programmatic Emphases***

The NFF suggests organizations position their proposed projects into at least one of the four NFF programmatic emphasis areas. These areas are Recreation, Wildlife Habitat Improvement, Community-Based Forestry and Watershed Health and Restoration. Each is briefly described below:

#### **Recreation**

Recreation is the fastest growing use of National Forests and Grasslands. The increase in visitor usage and encroaching development results in increased human impacts to ecosystems. Maintaining the integrity of these forest and grassland resources is vital for both ecosystem viability and quality recreational experiences. Through citizen involvement in activities such as trail restoration and maintenance, communities can help ameliorate these pressures. Additionally, through the support of

collaborative processes involving multiple interests, communities can work collectively to enhance future recreation experiences.

The SCF will make strategic investments in action-oriented projects that help enhance the experiences of diverse recreation interests through trail maintenance, collaborative processes, site improvement, recreational damage restoration or mitigation, recreation resource inventory and maintenance, and related projects.

#### Wildlife Habitat Improvement

The diverse habitats found within the National Forests and Grasslands support more than 3,000 species of birds, mammals, reptiles, fish, and amphibians. For many Americans, engaging in wildlife viewing, fishing, and hunting within these habitats often serves as the primary means of connection to the outdoors, and provides important revenue for state and local economies.

The SCF will make strategic investments in action-oriented projects that improve conditions for maintaining viable populations of native plants and animals through action-oriented projects.

#### Community-Based Forestry

The NFF believes that communities can work to improve natural resources, while providing local economic and social benefits. The aim of community-based forestry is to empower those who work, live and recreate in the woods to work together and strive towards a common set of goals.

The SCF will support action-oriented community-based forestry projects, particularly those that focus on forest health and restoration. Projects should address the need for greater collaboration in community-based forestry projects. Local constituencies should be included in the decision-making process through conservation and restoration projects that support economically sustainable natural resource use or address wildfire risk reduction and response.

#### Watershed Health & Restoration

National Forest lands are the largest single source of fresh water in the United States. The water sources that begin on National Forest lands bring life to agricultural lands and clean water to communities, and are conservatively estimated to be worth at least \$3.7 billion per year. Protecting these watersheds is one of the primary reasons the U.S. Forest Service was established, and maintaining and restoring these watersheds is of vital importance. The patchwork of Federal and non-Federal lands in many watersheds makes public-private partnerships even more crucial to ensuring clean water and vibrant ecosystems.

The SCF will support investment in watershed restoration and enhancement projects, especially those initiatives that include diverse perspectives and address critical issues such as watershed restoration and fish habitat enhancement.

#### ***Who Should Apply:***

Applications will be considered from non-Federal partners, community-based organizations, Native American tribes and other nonprofit organizations doing on-the-ground conservation or citizen-based monitoring on or around the Inyo National Forest. Nonfederal government entities are eligible for funding as long as the project proposed is predominantly funded by outside, nongovernmental sources.

**Who Should Not Apply:**

Applications will not be considered from:

- Federal agencies;
- For-profit organizations;
- Consultants;
- Educational and research organizations proposing projects that do not show tangible, on-the-ground benefit;
- Organizations seeking general operating support;
- Organizations seeking funding for litigation or advocacy;
- Organizations that cannot produce a minimum 25% cash or documented in-kind, non-Federal match.

**Selection Criteria:**

Successful projects will support the major strategic initiatives and current priorities of the NFF and the U.S. Forest Service. For more information on these, please visit the *Conservation Issues* section of the NFF website at [www.natlforests.org](http://www.natlforests.org). Priority will be given to action-oriented projects that proactively address at least one of the programmatic emphasis areas through on-the-ground conservation projects or citizen-based monitoring. Weighted advantage will be given to projects that address primarily wildlife and/or recreation issues. Evaluation will be based on the extent to which a proposed project:

1. Improves the conditions of the Inyo National Forest in a measurable, hands-on way, or engages community members in citizen-based monitoring that leads to implementation through projects that benefit Inyo National Forest;
2. Demonstrates multiple benefits to the resource base and involvement of surrounding communities, and demonstrable means by which to measure project success;
3. Demonstrates an effective method to share project information and results;
4. Demonstrates a commitment to, and a detailed plan for, community involvement and participation in the development and implementation of the project;
5. Obtains non-Federal cash or documented in-kind project contributions valued at a minimum of 25% of the total amount being requested through the SCF;
6. Secures additional project funding sources beyond SCF funds;
7. Provides sufficient detail to enable the evaluation of:
  - a. Project design;
  - b. Specific project activities;
  - c. Anticipated project results;
  - d. Methods for evaluation;
  - e. The organization's ability to complete the project within one-year of the award date.

**Program Priorities:**

The following are not program priorities and may only be considered as minor, critical components of larger projects:

- Environmental education
- Kiosks
- Signage
- New trail construction (authorized reroutes of existing trails are okay)
- Capital expenditures such as:
  - Heavy equipment purchase
  - Building construction and/or improvement

If in doubt about whether a project might be considered by the Evaluation Committee, please do not hesitate to contact the NFF. Contact information is provided at the end of this document.

***Ski Conservation Fund Financial Requirements:***

SCF funds awarded will be disbursed only as a match to anticipated cash or in-kind non-Federal contribution of at least 25% of the total award. Award funds:

- Must be used for the purpose of completing work that benefits the Inyo National Forest;
- Cannot be used for general administrative purposes.
- Cannot be directed back to the U.S. Forest Service or any other federal entity.

***Proposal Guidelines:***

Proposals should closely follow the guidelines described below. They must be typed in a standard font, no smaller than 12 point, with margins of no less than ¾". Include page numbers on the bottom of each page and your organization's name and project title as a header at the top of each page. Please do not print double-sided or staple your proposal (paperclips and binder clips are fine).

Your proposal should contain the following components:

A. **Executive Summary** for proposed project (Up to 1 page)

B. **Project Goals and Objectives** (Up to 3 pages)

What are you proposing to do? Please provide your project description, clearly laying out specific, goals and objectives of what you want to achieve. This section should include:

- Justification of need for the project;
- Demonstrable benefits the project will have on the National Forest and surrounding communities;
- How you will involve the community in the planning and/or implementation of the project;
- What long-term benefits the community will gain from this project;
- How the results of this project may be shared and replicated elsewhere.

C. **Methods to Achieve Objectives** (Up to 2 pages)

How do you propose to meet the goals you have set out? Please include responses to the following questions:

- How will you achieve the goals and objectives laid out above?
- Please provide specific, hands-on steps that you will take.
- Provide details of the tasks and include **an implementation timetable** with a description of the activities, the person(s) to be responsible for conducting the activities, anticipated start date and completion date.
- How will you work with other partner organizations on this project?

D. **Expected Results** (Up to 1-2 pages)

Discuss what your organization believes the results of this project would be. Please consider the following points:

- What are the anticipated results of the project?
- If you receive funding, what will be different at the end of the award period?
- Quantify the expected project outcomes such as the number of volunteers involved, the number of acres affected, or miles of road restored.

- E. **Environmental Compliance** (Up to 1 page)  
Please address whether the proposed project will require any type of environmental permitting, including NEPA compliance. If so, has all required compliance been achieved?
- F. **Monitoring and Evaluation** (Up to 1 page)  
Discuss the indicators and measurements that will be used to evaluate the success or failure of the project, and whether it meets the anticipated results. Please consider these important questions:
- How do you anticipate monitoring and demonstrating the effect(s) this project has had on the forest, landscape and surrounding communities?
  - How will you share these results with the community?
  - If this is an ongoing project, how will results from monitoring be incorporated into the project's continuing implementation?
- G. **Financial Plan** (posted at [http://www.natlforests.org/ski\\_conservation\\_application.html](http://www.natlforests.org/ski_conservation_application.html))  
Approval of a project provides funding for one-year with the signing and receipt of an award recipient agreement. Complete the financial plan form to show how SCF funds will be utilized if this project is approved for funding.

The Financial Plan is a central reference point in the project's proposal, combining budget and contributor information in a single table. Budgetary information is condensed into categories and represented in the horizontal rows, then attributed to various sources of funding in the vertical columns. Please use the provided categories for classifying expenditures, wherever possible. Funding sources are defined as follows:

**Column (a)**

**Proposed SCF Funds:** Funds requested through NFF SCF, consisting of Federal funds and voluntary donations from guests at Mammoth Mountain that must be matched with documented in-kind contribution(s).

**Column (b)**

**Private Funds:** Supporting project funds from sources other than the NFF SCF or Federal agencies or programs. They are not eligible to serve as an in-kind match to SCF funds, but may be documented to show additional leverage.

**Column (c)**

**Matching In-Kind Contributions:** Documented donation of non-Federal goods and services (such as volunteer labor, materials or equipment) which are applied toward goals outlined in the project description. A minimum in-kind contribution of 25% of the total SCF award must be used to show project leverage.

**Column (d)**

**Other Federal Funds:** Funds or contributions from any Federal sources. These are not eligible to serve as an in-kind match to SCF funds, but may be documented to show additional leverage.

**Column (e)**

**Total Category Value:** The sum of columns (a) through (d) for each category.

Please note that SCF funds cannot be directed to the U.S. Forest Service or any other Federal entity. Any unexpended or unmatched SCF funds must be returned to the NFF upon close of the project.

H. **Budget Narrative** (Up to 1 page)

Briefly summarize your project financial plan in bulleted narrative form. For each budget category, specifically describe how SCF funds would be spent if the project is funded. Typically, two or three sentences for each category should be sufficient.

I. **Organizational Background** (Up to 1 page)

Please provide information on the history, mission and goals of your organization. What are the program priorities of your organization and the constituency and geographic area that you serve? How does this fit in with the NFF priority programmatic areas of community-based forestry, watershed health, wildlife habitat improvement and/or recreation?

J. **List of your organization's board of directors** (Up to 1 page)

K. **Biographical sketch of professional staff** (Up to 1 page)

***Submitting your Proposal***

To submit your proposals, please prepare one unstapled, single-sided document containing:

1. **SCF Cover Sheet** (available at [http://www.natlforests.org/ski\\_conservation\\_application.html](http://www.natlforests.org/ski_conservation_application.html))
2. **Your proposal** containing above components A-K;
3. **A signed letter of support** from the appropriate Inyo National Forest District Ranger(s). Please do not send additional letters of support.
4. **A basic map** showing the location of the proposed project;
5. **A letter from the IRS** demonstrating nonprofit, tax-exempt status;
6. **Most recent audited financial statement**. If you do not have an audited financial statement, please send an unaudited accounting of finances.

Send all copies to the National Forest Foundation at the address below for receipt **on or before Friday, April 4, 2008.**

**Ski Conservation Fund: Inyo National Forest  
National Forest Foundation  
Building 27, Suite 3 Fort Missoula Rd.  
Missoula, MT 59804**

You will receive confirmation of receipt of your proposal via e-mail. Proposals received after the deadline and electronic or faxed submissions will not be considered

***Questions***

Please contact Adam Liljeblad, NFF Conservation Programs Officer, at (406) 542-2805, ext. 12 or [aliljeblad@natlforests.org](mailto:aliljeblad@natlforests.org) with questions regarding this or any other NFF Award Program.

**Full proposals must be received by the NFF on or before Friday, April 4, 2008.  
Late proposals will not be considered.**