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Subject: Request for Proposals - Fiscal Year 2005 Forest Health Monitoring, Evaluation
Monitoring Projects

To: Regional Foresters, Station Directors, Area Director, IITF Director

OPTIONAL REPLY DUE SEPTEMBER 15, 2004

The Forest Health Monitoring (FHM) program is a cooperative program that enables the early detection and evaluation of changes in forest health conditions on all ownerships. The Evaluation Monitoring (EM) component of the FHM program is designed to determine the extent, severity, and causes of undesirable changes in forest health identified through Detection Monitoring using aerial and ground surveys, permanent plots, and other means. Projects funded through EM delve into the extent, severity, and/or causes of forest health problems. By this letter, we are requesting proposals for the EM program for Fiscal Year (FY) 2005.

Project Proposals should be submitted by **September 15, 2004** to the FHM Regional Managers: Jim Steinman for Northeast FHM Region (jsteinman@fs.fed.us), Manfred Mielke for Northcentral FHM Region (mmeilke@fs.fed.us), Jim Brown for Southern FHM Region (jdbrown@fs.fed.us), Jeri Lynn Harris for Interior West FHM Region (jharris@fs.fed.us), or Alison Nelson for Pacific Coast FHM Region (asnelson@fs.fed.us). A template for project proposals is attached to this letter.

Projects will be selected through two separate competitions reflecting funding source: Base EM and Fire Plan EM. Regional FHM Managers are responsible for ranking all projects from their respective regions and submitting two separate proposal packages to Borys Tkacz, the National FHM Program Manager (btkacz@fs.fed.us). Individual proposals will be evaluated by a National Panel for either Base EM or Fire Plan EM, but not both, as specified in the packages received from Regional FHM Managers. While we do not have the final budget allocations at this time, anticipated funding levels will be: \$700,000 for Base EM (with approximately \$343,000 committed to continuing Base EM projects and \$150,000 being dedicated to Regional EM projects leaving \$207,000 for new Base EM projects) and \$575,000 for Fire Plan EM (with approximately \$200,000 committed to continuing Fire Plan EM projects leaving \$375,000 for new Fire Plan EM projects).

Base EM Project Competition:

The purpose of a Base Evaluation Monitoring project is to investigate issues or concerns identified in the Detection Monitoring phase of FHM. Proposed projects should be one-three years in duration. Successful projects will help to explain the extent, severity, and/or cause of a phenomenon that has already been observed in the survey and/or permanent plot components of Detection Monitoring. Based on current analyses of forest health indicators tracked through the



FHM program, we would be particularly interested in project proposals dealing with the following:

- Drought – deviations from normal precipitation and related effects;
- Air Pollutants – effects of sulfate and nitrate deposition and ozone;
- Tree mortality – deviations from expected levels;
- Poor crown conditions – deviations from normal;
- Insects and diseases – deviations from expected damage levels;
- Soil conditions – including forest floor depth, compaction, and erosion potential;
- Fragmentation – effects of fragmentation of forest cover.

Information on specific Regional forest health issues and concerns is available from the Regional FHM Program Managers.

The basic allocations for the FY 2005 Base Evaluation Monitoring phase of FHM are:

1. Each of the five FHM regions will receive \$30,000 allocated for Evaluation Monitoring for local projects. The Regional FHM Program Managers should work with Forest Health Protection (FHP) Directors in their respective FS Regions to develop plans for using these funds.
2. The remaining funds will be allocated based upon a national competition. The National Program Manager will select proposals for funding based upon a peer-review process and recommendations of an expert panel that is chaired by the National Program Manager. Each FHM Region may submit three to five Base EM proposals for consideration. Recommendations will be based on the following criteria:
 - a. Linkage to FHM Detection Monitoring-- the need for the project should arise from an analysis of FHM survey data and/or Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA) plot data;
 - b. Significance in terms of the geographic scale;
 - c. Biological impact and/or political importance of the issue;
 - d. Feasibility or probability that the project will be successfully completed.

Please make sure the criteria are addressed in your proposals.

Proposals should be no longer than three pages (including cost information). Proposals should address data availability. Any projects requiring access to FIA plot coordinates should be discussed with Regional FIA work units or Liz LaPoint (email: elapoint@fs.fed.us) from the Spatial Data Services of FIA prior to submission of proposals. The National Office will not pay any overhead charges unless they are included in the project budget that is submitted with the proposal. The budget must include all overhead or other indirect costs going to the Region, Area, or Station, or to cooperating institutions.

Previously funded, multi-year proposals from prior years will be given priority if the investigators have reported sufficient progress by September 15, 2004. Proposals for continued funding of multi-year projects should include a progress statement (within the three-page limit). The FHM Management Team requires that results and progress reports for all national competition EM projects be summarized in posters presented at the annual FHM Working Group meeting. Upon project completion, investigators will submit a final published report, and an executive summary in FHM 'fact sheet' format.

Fire Plan EM Competition:

The purpose of a Fire Plan Evaluation Monitoring project is to investigate and explain the extent, severity, and/or cause of a fire-related phenomenon that has been observed in the Detection Monitoring components of FHM. General target areas are use of FHP survey or FIA plot data to address Fire Plan issues. The National Fire Plan is available online at <http://www.fireplan.gov/>. Proposed projects should be one-three years in duration. We encourage project proposals dealing with the following:

- Fire risk and fuel loading;
- Ecological impacts of fires;
- Invasive species – insects, diseases and plants;
- Restoration or fire-damaged ecosystems.

The basic allocations for the FY 2005 Fire Evaluation Monitoring funds of FHM are:

1. Each of the five FHM regions may submit three to five proposals for Fire Plan EM funding. The FHM National Program Manager will select proposals for funding based upon a peer-review process and recommendations of an expert panel that is chaired by the National Program Manager. Recommendations will be based on the following criteria:
 - a. Linkage to FHM Detection Monitoring-- the need for the project should arise from an analysis of FHM survey data and/or Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA) plot data relative to fire issues stated above or found in the National Fire Plan;
 - b. Significance in terms of the geographic scale;
 - c. Biological impact and/or political importance of the issue related to fire;
 - d. Feasibility or probability that the project will be successfully completed within 1-3 years, with some immediate products in the first year and each year thereafter.

Please make sure the criteria are addressed in your proposals and that there is a clear, obvious link to Fire Plan issues.

Proposals should be no longer than three pages (including cost information). Proposals should address data availability. Any projects requiring access to Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA) plot coordinates should be discussed with Regional FIA work units or Liz LaPoint (email: elapoint@fs.fed.us) from the Spatial Data Services of FIA prior to submission of proposals. The National Office will not pay any overhead charges unless they are included in the project budget that is submitted with the proposal. The budget must include all overhead or other indirect costs going to the Region or Area, or to cooperating institutions.

Previously funded, multi-year proposals from prior years will be given priority if the investigators have reported sufficient progress by September 15, 2004. Proposals for continued funding of multi-year projects should include a progress statement (within the three-page limit). The FHM Management Team requires that results and progress reports for all national competition EM projects be summarized in posters presented at the annual FHM Working Group meeting. Upon project completion, investigators will submit a final published report, and an executive summary in FHM 'fact sheet' format.

I encourage the FHM Regional Managers and FHP Directors to work together to organize and submit project proposals. Please contact me at (703) 605-5343 or btkacz@fs.fed.us if you have questions related to the FHM program.

/s/ Borys M. Tkacz

BORYS M. TKACZ

National Program Manager, Forest Health Monitoring

cc: Robert Mangold, fhm mt, fhp leaders, Lawrence Turner