

Alaska Invasive Plants Program Grant

Overview

The primary purpose of the Alaska Association of Conservation District's (AACD) Invasive Plants Program Grant (IPP) is to support quick and effective responses to invasive plant infestations in Alaska by supplementing local funds and resources for inventory, eradication and control and/or educational efforts. Program funds will be distributed through established Cooperative Weed Management Areas (CWMAs). CWMAs integrate weed management resources across jurisdictional boundaries and facilitate local cooperation and planning through the use of a local steering committee. Therefore, allowing CWMAs exclusive utilization of IPP funds provides an efficient and practical means to strengthen on-the-ground management of invasive plants in Alaska. In some cases, an extremely high priority infestation may occur in an area not included in a CWMA. In these cases the IPP committee may determine that it is necessary to proceed with eradication or control measures. For these special circumstances the relevant Soil and Water Conservation District or other local non-federal entity can assume responsibilities associated with a CWMA and apply for IPP funds.

IPP funds require a non-federal match through cash or in-kind services. For education and outreach the match is 1:1. For inventory, control and eradication work done on non-federal public or private lands the match is 1:1. For details on control and eradication match requirements see # 5 under "Criteria". Cost share grants are not intended to be a substitute or replacement for borough or agency funds nor for costs that should be legitimately borne by landowners. Rather, they are to be used as a supplement to the resources of landowners, and local, borough, state, and federal partners, particularly where a true resource crisis exists and for which delaying action due to lack of resources would lead to accelerated resource deterioration and economic loss.

Proposals will be reviewed by the IPP technical committee. This committee will rank proposals based on the information provided by the applicant. Successful project proposals are those that include a realistic budget, high-priority infestation, and an active local work group.

Infestations of Highest Priority

IPP funds are intended to target those invasive plant species and specific infestations that pose a threat to forested lands or wildlands, with an emphasis on invasive plant species that are new to Alaska or to a region within the state. Widely distributed invasive plant species or species that are problematic in agricultural settings only, and do not pose an imminent threat to natural areas or wild lands, are not eligible for these funds. Proposals that are most likely to receive IPP funding are those consistent with #4 under "Criteria".

Cooperative Weed Management Areas in Alaska

In Alaska, CWMA's are typically developed, staffed and led by Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs). Alaska SWCDs are entities of state government working under the Department of Natural Resources with volunteer boards of directors consisting of landowners and resource users from the local area. Where appropriate for geography, weed infestations, climate or human-use patterns a CWMA may encompass the work of more than one SWCD or an SWCD may oversee more than one CWMA.

In order for a CWMA to be considered active and eligible for IPP funding three things must be in place or in the process of being put in place —a charter establishing the CWMA and its steering committee, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that includes key landholders, organizations and agencies, and an active action group responsible for carrying out CWMA projects and events. Although not required for IPP funds, CWMA's that also have an annual operating plan and an integrated weed management plan will receive additional consideration in the application review process. SWCDs that are applying for IPP funds to be used outside of an established CWMA will need to provide documentation of the involvement of local and state entities in the development of the application, planned activities and acquisition of match.

Allowable Costs for IPP grants

The following lists explain costs for both grant expenditures and cost share contributions:

Eligible Costs:

- Purchase and application of herbicides
- Application of cultural practices such as grubbing or mowing
- Equipment rental
- Purchase of equipment and tools when specified in the grant agreement
- Contract work related to weed management and eradication
- Restoration practices including the purchase and seeding of desirable plant species
- Development of innovative grazing and related management practices, and demonstration areas which highlight an integrated weed management approach
- Training recipient staff to develop skills specific and necessary to the funded project and where the training is identified in the application
- Mapping and surveying costs, as related to determination of treatment locations and logistics, including costs of associated hardware and software
- Project management (planning, administration, and follow up monitoring)
- Public participation and public awareness directly related to the project
- Other items as determined by the IPP Committee
- Sales tax

Ineligible Costs

- Activities other state and federal agencies are required to perform
- Activities not identified in the cost share application
- Fines and penalties due to violations of, or failures to comply with federal, state or local laws
- Interest on bonds, interim financing, and associated costs to finance projects
- Legal expenses
- Lobbying or expenses associated with lobbying
- Ordinary operating expenses of state or local government, such as salaries and expenses of a mayor, city council member, city attorney, etc.
- Professional dues
- Training unrelated to the project
- Scientific research unrelated to a specific activity
- Other items as determined by the Alaska IPP Committee

Every effort should be made to utilize equipment available through local CWMA partners, such as the USDA NRCS, the USFS, or local Cooperative Extension Service. Equipment purchases must be justifiable purchases for the CWMA or SWCD region.

Proposal Content

- 1. Proposal Narrative.** Proposals should aim to inform succinctly, in 3-4 pages. Please include the following elements in your project proposal:
 - a. Project overview:** In a few sentences, define the existing problem- Why is this infestation considered high-priority?
 - b. Project goals:** Outline both short and long-term goals.
 - c. Project Need:** (Form C.) Detail target invasive plant and project site information, including location (project location information should include a map, latitude and longitude, legal description and/or Meridian Township Range and Section), size of infestation, ecosystems/habitat types involved, past and current land uses, land holders, weed(s) targeted, and the life cycle, biology and selected control options for each. (i.e. Why your project activities will be effective in controlling this plant at this time.)
 - d. Project Activities:** Inventory and treatment plans, including plans for follow-up monitoring and treatment. Include dates for project initiation, completion, and target outcomes. Education plans including plans to reach target audiences.
 - e. Organizational information:** Identify project leaders and participants, and the responsibilities of each.
 - f. Budget:** List of expenses, matching non-federal funds, and value of in-kind services. (Form B.) Your CWMA may also use your own detailed planning budget; Form B is a required summary of budget categories.
 - g. Identified match narrative:** (include with budget, Form B.) Proposals must have 50%, non-federal funds to match (cash or in-kind) the IPP funds requested, depending on land ownership. Half of the proposed match must be identified in the original proposal, upon submission. See Criteria #5.
- 2. Summary of previously funded IPP projects.**

For CWMA's who have *previously* been granted IPP funds through this program, please include a brief overview of the utilization of those funds, and project outcomes. The accomplishments of previous IPP grant projects will be reviewed as a part of criteria for future funding.

Criteria

1. Applicants must be actively involved in an existing Cooperative Weed Management Area, as a mechanism for receiving and documenting grant funds and maintaining accurate financial records is required. In special cases, where a high priority infestation occurs in an area not included in a CWMA, a Soil and Water Conservation District may be permitted to assume responsibilities associated with a CWMA and apply for IPP funds.
2. All proposed invasive plant treatments involving chemical herbicides must fully comply with Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC) pesticide control regulations, as amended under the Alaska Administrative Code.
(www.state.ak.us/dec/eh/pest)
3. Administrative overhead/indirect services cannot exceed 15% of total project costs.
4. Project sites must include or be within one mile of lands with a minimum of 10% “forested land”. (Forested land is at least 10% stocked, or currently non-stocked but where forest succession will occur. Tree species can be of any size.) Invasive plant species targeted for control must be species that are likely to invade forest, woodland, or riparian areas of Alaska.
5. The maximum IPP grant share of project costs is 50% for private landowners or non-Federal public lands.
6. One half of the proposed match must be identified in the proposal narrative, under “Identified Match Narrative”.
7. Funds are available through a reimbursable basis following the receipt of acceptable documentation. Advances may also be arranged in some cases. Proposals need clear end date, no more than two years from start date. Any funds advanced but not spent upon the end of the project will be returned. Recipients will sign the grant award document showing agreement with all the criteria listed. An approved representative of the CWMA will sign the agreement.
8. Applicants may be permitted to provide additional information, or to amend their proposals, after submission.
9. The Selection Committee, in its sole discretion, may accept or reject a proposal, and may award an IPP grant.
10. The Selection Committee, in its discretion, may consider additional criteria in determining whether to award an IPP grant.

Post Award Activities

1. Each CWMA will be responsible for submitting short (2 pages) quarterly reports to AACD. Quarters end on March 31st, June 30th, September 30th and December 31st. **Quarterly reports are due to the IPP Program Coordinator by the 10th day of the month following the end of the quarter.** Reports should include: progress, accomplishments, challenges, plans next quarter, and any unexpected results or adjustments to the work plan timeline. Quarterly reports should also include an updated budget report including match details met to date. In addition, copies of any deliverables produced during the quarter should be included: flyers, photographs, data, maps, etc. CWMA's may submit quarterly reports via e-mail, but should send one hard copy of deliverables to the IPP Program Coordinator.
2. CWMA's can request monthly advances. Monthly expense reimbursements from AACD should be requested as part of the normal District reimbursements, along with documentation of expenses.
3. A final report must be submitted, with a narrative of treatment process and results, suggestions for future invasive plant control projects, high-quality digital images, and a list of expenditures with in-kind contributions outlined.

Contacts for further information:

- **Selection Committee, Application Process and Submission:**

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- **Technical Committee, Control options:**

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