



Forest Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Entity Guidelines Use Case: Landowner Payment Programs for Carbon Stewardship Practices

Forest Landowner Support
State, Private, and Tribal Forestry

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The background features a large, light gray watermark of the United States Forest Service logo. The logo is circular and contains a stylized evergreen tree in the center. The words "FOREST SERVICE" are written in an arc above the tree, and "DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE" is written in an arc below it. The text "U.S." is also visible in the center of the logo.

Forest Landowner Support (FLS) is a new initiative established by the Inflation Reduction Act to enhance climate-smart forestry through emerging market participation and payments for land management practices.

Opportunities are designed to provide benefits for **people and the environment**, including underserved and small-acreage landowners.

Context & Need: Moving from IRA Provision to Funding Opportunity

IRA Sec 23002 (a)(4)

\$50,000,000 for the competitive grant program **to provide payments to owners of private forest land for implementation of forestry practices** on private forest land, that are determined by the Secretary, based on the best available science, to **provide measurable increases in carbon sequestration and storage** beyond customary practices on comparable land

The FLS team needed:

- A plan for assessing whether applicant-proposed practices lead to measurable carbon benefits
- To support applicants without carbon experts on staff
- To empower applicants to calculate their own carbon benefit estimates
- A plan for continuously updating estimates, as funded projects evolve

Solution: Asking Applicants to Engage the Entity Guidelines

Carbon Benefit Quantification

Applicants must estimate the anticipated carbon benefits associated with their projects. **For estimating carbon benefits, applicants are welcome to either (A) utilize the [USDA Entity Guidelines](#) Level 1 approach or (B) propose their own methodology.** If the Entity Guidelines' Level 1 approach to carbon benefit estimation encompasses an applicants' proposed practices, this approach is encouraged, as it provides the USDA Forest Service a consistent method for quantifying the carbon benefits of projects supported by this funding opportunity. However, the list of practices covered by Level 1 is limited. Applicants proposing to implement practices not covered by Level 1 should propose their own methodology.

Current status:

- Applications are currently under panel review
- >50% of applicants used the L1 Entity Guidelines workbook to arrive at estimates of carbon benefits

Strengths of E.G.s for this FLS initiative

The Entity Guidelines L1 approach...

- Offers a standardized, USDA-endorsed tool for estimating carbon benefits.
- Is accessible to those without carbon quantification expertise, with straightforward data entry.
- Calculates conservative projections of carbon flux for 50 years following treatment.



Weaknesses of E.G.s for this FLS initiative

The Entity Guidelines L1 approach...

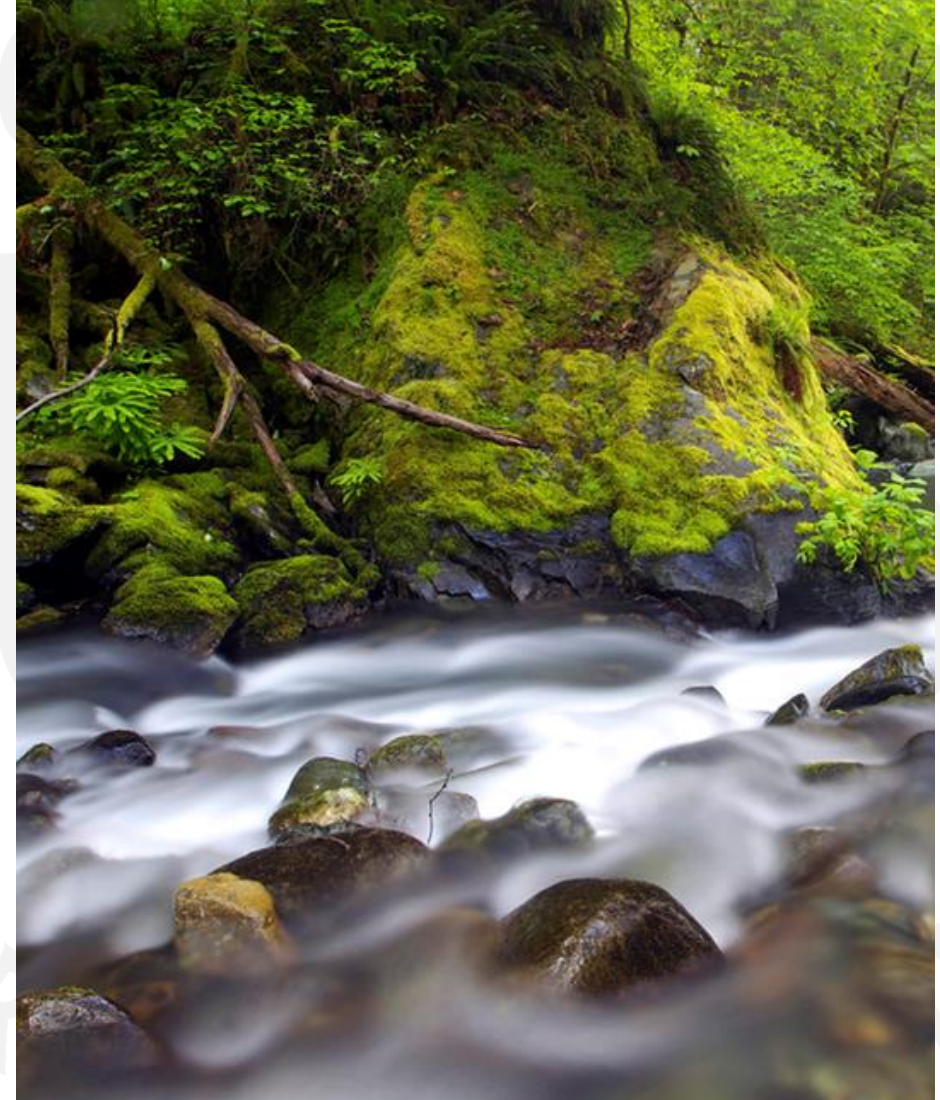
- Does not include several carbon stewardship treatments of interest, including thinning, invasive species removal, soil amendment, seedling protection, and removing surface fuels.
- Is confined to the continental U.S.
- Can look intimidating at first.



Ideas for Future Iterations

FLS Wish List:

- Expansion of practices/treatments included.
- Expansion of geographies included (HI, AK, PR).
- Online workbook with user-friendly interface.
- Externally-facing training videos with case studies included.



Thanks for listening.

Please don't hesitate to reach out.

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