



Forest Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE



Forest Health Protection
Evaluation Monitoring Program

Proposal Instructions
and Guidelines

New and Renewal Proposal Instructions for FY 2022

Forest Health Monitoring (FHM) is a cooperative program that enables early detection and evaluation of changes in forest health conditions on all ownerships. The Evaluation Monitoring (EM) component of FHM is designed to evaluate undesirable changes in forest health. Projects funded through EM investigate the extent, severity, and/or causes of forest health problems.

Project Proposals for new and continuing projects should be submitted by **October 15, 2021**, to the FHM Regional Managers: **Stephen Burr** for Northeast and North Central FHM Regions (stephen.burr@usda.gov), **Chris Asaro** for Southern FHM Region (christopher.asaro@usda.gov), **Ryan Hanavan** for Interior West FHM Region (ryan.hanavan@usda.gov), or **Karen Ripley** for West Coast FHM Region (karen.ripley@usda.gov). The FHM Regional Managers will, in turn, forward their top selected proposals to the Washington Office by **November 30, 2021**. A fillable PDF for new project proposals, progress and final reports can be found at the [FHP Grants webpage](#). For best results, please use Adobe [Acrobat Reader DC](#) when filling out the forms on either PC or Mac machines. All proposals must be developed in close consultation with the Forest Service Forest Health Protection (FHP) staff designated as the FHP sponsor.

Regional FHM Managers are responsible for ranking projects from their respective regions and submitting up to 5 new projects, along with progress reports and proposals from continuing projects, to **Joel Eagen**, acting FHM Program Manager (joel.eagen@usda.gov). Funding levels for the program depend on specific appropriations; therefore, funding available for EM may change based on final budget direction for FY 2021.

EM Project Competition:

The purpose of Evaluation Monitoring project is to investigate the extent, severity, and /or cause of forest health issues. Proposed projects should be 1-3 years in duration. Based on current analyses of forest health indicators tracked through the FHM program (see the [FHM National Technical Reports](#) and [State Highlights](#)), we are particularly interested in project proposals dealing with the following priority issues:

- **Environmental Change and Impacts** – long-term effects on forests, forest pests, frequency/severity of fires and/or fuel dynamics;
- **Unusual weather events**– deviations from normal patterns of vegetation dynamics due to unusual weather and related effects;
- **Remote sensing technology** - Utilization of recently developed tools and techniques to assess forest health conditions;
- **Tree mortality** – deviations from expected levels - outbreaks of specific organisms or conditions that result in widespread and intense tree mortality;
- **Invasive species** – forest disturbances from insects, diseases and/or plants;
- **FIA Integration** - Projects that explore the use of FIA data to characterize or analyze tree mortality. Projects that focus on the use of FIA data to determine invasive species movement and impact.

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

Each FHM Mega-Region may submit five new EM proposals for consideration by the National EM Panel. Proposals will be evaluated using the following criteria:

1. Linkage to FHM program.
2. Significance/Impact of forest health issue.
3. Methods.
4. Cost/Economic efficiency.
5. Priority Issues.

For your information, please see attached description of EM Project Rating Criteria.

General Requirements:

EM Proposals, Progress Reports and Final Reports **must** be submitted by using the forms found on the [Forest Health Protection Grants web page](#). Download the blank form, enter the appropriate information, and submit the saved document to the appropriate Mega-Region Coordinator. 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 Tom Thompson (email: thomas.g.thompson@usda.gov) from the Spatial Data Services of FIA prior to submission of proposals.

The budget must include all overhead or other indirect costs requested to and pre-approved by the Region/Area, or to cooperating institutions. Projects on non-federal lands need to show non-federal contributions of 50% of the total project costs (1:1 match). For multi-year projects, funding for each requested year is awarded in the year it is needed based on demonstrated progress (see following).

Continuing Proposals:

Previously funded, multi-year proposals from prior years will be given priority if the investigators have reported sufficient progress by submitting annual requests for continuation by October 15, 2021. Proposals for continued funding of multi-year projects should include a progress statement by submitting the completed EM Continuing Project Report form found on the [Forest Health Protection Grants web page](#). The budget requested for continuing years must not exceed that approved in the original proposal.

Reporting Requirements:

Final reporting of project results are to be presented in three formats: 1) Project details including final budget information are to be submitted by using the EM Final Report form found on the [Forest Health Protection Grants web page](#) 2) The FHM Management Team requires that results and progress reports for all national competition EM projects are summarized in posters presented at the biennial FHM Working Group meeting or posted on the FHM website. 3) Upon project completion, investigators will submit to the respective FHM Regional Managers a detailed final report, and a 2-5 page executive summary to be published in the annual [FHM National Technical Report](#).

Any publications resulting from these projects should acknowledge funding provided by the Forest Service Forest Health Monitoring program. Regardless of format, all Web content or communications materials produced, including text, audio or video - must conform to applicable Section 508 standards to allow federal employees and members of the public with disabilities to access information that is comparable to information provided to persons without disabilities. See <https://www.section508.gov/> for more information. Please note that the FHM program is currently developing procedures for archiving data generated by EM projects.

Forest Health Monitoring – Evaluation Monitoring Project Rating Criteria

A total of 5 Evaluation Monitoring Project Proposals may be submitted from each FHM Mega-Region. The forwarded projects will be selected by Mega-Region Coordinators who will have reviewed them at the Mega-Region level.

Forwarded Projects will be reviewed by a National Review Team out of the Washington Office. The National Review Team will numerically rate forwarded projects for merit based on the following criteria. The number of projects funded will depend upon available funds, highest priority goes to Continuing Projects, then as many high rated projects will be funded as possible.

- 1. *Linkage to FHM program.*** The need for the project should arise from analyses of FHM (Forest Health Monitoring) surveys, Aerial Detection and Survey (ADS), and/or FIA (Forest Inventory and Analysis) ground plot data; priority issues raised by Regional or National FHM Management Teams; or Focus Group Resolutions from FHM Workgroup Meetings.
- 2. *Significance/Impact of forest health issue.*** This criterion addresses the relative significance or impact of the forest health issue addressed by the project. Factors to consider include: biological, economic, and social impacts; geographic scope; potential management implications. Proposers are encouraged to clearly describe how results can be applied at broader scales.
- 3. *Methods.*** This criterion addresses: the degree to which proposed methods are based on sound science. Factors to consider include: feasibility of proposed methods; the likelihood that the project will be successfully completed within the proposed timeframe; the track record of principal investigators.
- 4. *Cost/Economic efficiency.*** This criterion addresses the cost and economic efficiency of the proposed project. Factors to consider include: the relative cost; economic efficiency; cost-sharing and leveraging of economic resources; administrative assessments.
- 5. *Priority Issues.*** This criterion reflects the degree to which the proposed project addresses priority issues developed by the FHM Management Team. Priority issues are listed in the Request for Proposals.