



NEWS RELEASE

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Contact:

Chad Briggs

Chad.Briggs@DOF.Virginia.gov

(434) 989-5035

\$160 MILLION AVAILABLE TO HELP COMMUNITIES PREPARE FOR WILDFIRES

Deadline to apply is Oct. 7

CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA – Applications are now open for the U.S. Department of Agriculture Community Wildfire Defense Grant (CWDG), a federal grant created by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. The grant is intended to help at-risk, local communities and tribes prepare and mitigate against the risk created by wildfire.

The Act prioritizes communities identified as high or very high wildfire hazard risk areas, are low income, or have been impacted by a severe disaster. Eligible Virginia counties and communities can be found on VDOF's [website](#). The deadline for applications is 11:59 p.m. on Oct. 7.

The three primary objectives for grant funding include the development of [community wildfire protection plans](#) (CWPP), the revision of a CWPP and the implementation of projects described in an existing CWPP (no more than 10 years old). Examples of eligible projects include wildfire safety and prevention outreach, hazardous fuel (combustible biomass: pine needles, twigs, shrubs, downed trees and logs) removal and fire-adapted ecosystem restoration.

Grants may be awarded to local governments, tribes and non-profit organizations (including homeowner associations). Approximately \$160 million will be available nationally each year over the next five years. The maximum grant amount for a project is:

- \$250,000 for creating or updating a CWPP; and
- \$10 million for project implementation as described in a CWPP that is no more than 10 years old.

All applications funded under the Community Wildfire Defense Grant require the applicant to provide matching funds. The required match by the applicant is as follows:

- At least 10% match for creating or updating a CWPP; and
- At least 25% match for project implementation as described in a CWPP that is no more than 10 years old.

“The rapid growth of housing across the Commonwealth near the wildland-urban interface increases wildfire risk,” said VDOF Assistant Director of Wildfire Prevention and Mitigation Chad Briggs. “By creating a community wildfire protection plan, communities can decrease that risk and protect property, our natural resources and possibly even lives. The Virginia Department of Forestry is pleased to

administer financial support for communities that can most take advantage of community wildfire mitigation projects.”

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About the Virginia Department of Forestry

The Virginia Department of Forestry (VDOF) protects and develops healthy, sustainable forest resources for Virginians. With nearly 16 million acres of forestland and more than 108,000 Virginians employed in forestry, forest products and related industries, Virginia forests provide an overall economic output of more than \$21 billion annually.

Headquartered in Charlottesville, the agency has forestry staff members assigned to every county to provide citizen service and public safety protection across the Commonwealth, which it’s been doing now for more than 100 years. VDOF is an equal opportunity provider.