

2026 (G26) Grants and Cooperative Agreements Program USFS - San Bernardino National Forest's Preliminary Application Comments

Comments submitted by the Department of Parks and Recreation (Department) Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation (OHMVR) Division to individual Grant Applicants should in no way be construed as a guarantee of successful results for the Applicant within the competitive Grants process or a commitment of funding. Additionally, the lack of comments by the OHMVR Division to any specific Applicant does not ensure successful results for the Applicant within the competitive Grant process or a commitment of funding.

Failure by the Applicant to respond to any OHMVR Division comment of their preliminary Application may be cause for eliminating that item from the Applicant's final Application.

All final Applications will be reviewed by the OHMVR Division. The OHMVR Division may, at its sole discretion, decrease the requested amount and eliminate activities pursuant with regulation Section 4970.07.2 (f)(1-5) and for Law Enforcement Projects, regulation Section 4970.15.3(b)(1-5).

If multiple proposed Projects are requesting funding for the same deliverable, and multiple projects are successful, only one project will receive funding for the deliverable.

For proposed Projects requesting Grant funding for snow and/or winter activities. Applicants must ensure the activities and/or Equipment/Heavy Equipment/Trailer requested are not and/or cannot be funded by the Department's Winter Program (commonly referred to as the Snow Grooming Program).

For proposed Projects requesting Grant funding for the maintenance of roads and/or trails, note that only roads and/or trails that allow "green sticker" Off-Highway Vehicles are allowed to receive Grant funding.

Applicants are reminded that no Grant funds and/or match can be expended, or Project activities conducted in any land owned or managed by the Department except as allowed in the Grants and Cooperative Agreements Program regulations section 4970.09 (b)(11).

General Evaluation Criteria:

- No comment.

Ground Operations: G26-02-14-G01

Project Description – Background

- No comment.

Project Description – Project Description

- Applicant must revise the statement “Soil condition ratings will be established on each OHV trail annually, using the Red, Yellow, Green format found in the 2008 state regulations” to ensure compliance with the most current 2020 Soil Conservation Standard and Guidelines. Project Deliverable #7 must also be updated to reflect the 2020 Soil Conservation Standard and Guidelines. In addition, “funding to have some of our findings along and in OHV routes tested to determine eligibility into the National Register” is an ineligible Project expense. Applicant must remove the verbiage and associated costs from the Project Cost Estimate.

Project Description – List of Project Deliverables

- #1 – Project Deliverable #1 is intended for on-the-ground trail and road maintenance activities. Applicant must relocate any duties related to monitoring to Project Deliverable #7 or Project Deliverable - Other. In addition, “Install class 2 rock to harden stream crossing” was listed in the previous year’s Application. Applicant must confirm whether this information is accurate and identify the specific stream crossing that is proposed to receive work in the current Application. Furthermore, Applicant must confirm if the “100+ miles of roads” and “40 miles” of trail being maintained in the trails contract is included in the work proposed in the first bullet point. I.e. “62 miles of 24”-50” trails and 175 miles of Green Sticker Routes.” The total miles of trail and road maintenance is unclear.
- #4 – Applicant must clarify why an additional staging area is being proposed for maintenance in the current Application compared to the prior year’s Application.

Project Description – All Others

- No comment.

Project Cost Estimate

- All Staff Line Items – Due to recent federal staffing reductions, Applicant must confirm that all staff positions listed in this Application are currently filled prior to the final Application submission.
- Staff #1, 2 & 4 – The percentage of staff time dedicated to Project Deliverable #1 and monitoring is unclear. Applicant must clarify within the line item notes what portion of staff time will be specifically dedicated to both monitoring activities and the maintenance of OHV trails and roads.

- Staff #1 “OHV Recreation Technicians” – It is unclear how 98% of these staff position's time is being requested as a direct Project cost. Applicant must carefully review the duties associated with these positions and ensure that any costs not directly related to accomplishing Project Deliverables are either moved to the Indirect Cost category or removed from the Application altogether.
- Staff #2 “Program Managers” – The daily program duties as described in the item notes appears to be primarily related to Indirect activities, as administering a proposed Project is considered an Indirect Cost. Applicant must either move this line item to the Indirect Cost category or provide a clear description of how the duties associated with this position are directly related to accomplishing the on-the-ground Project Deliverables. In their response, Applicant must clearly indicate whether the work will be conducted in the field, in the office, or a combination of both.
- Staff #3 “Archaeologist” – The proposed quantity of hours requested for this line item has increased significantly compared to the prior year's Application. Applicant must provide a detailed explanation justifying this increase. In addition, Applicant must remove any costs associated with “additional funding into the National Registry” as referenced in the Project Description, as this activity is not an eligible Project expense.
- Staff #4 “Adopt a Trail and SCMF OHV Volunteers” – The proposed cost for this line item appears excessive compared to the scope of work outlined in the Project Description. Applicant must provide a clear explanation of how the line item cost was determined, including the specific locations and number of miles of roads and trails to be maintained in relation to Project Deliverable #1. It is unclear from the Project Description which agencies are responsible for maintaining which specific miles of road and trail.
- Staff #5 “Visitor Center Frontline Staff” – Compared to like Projects, the proposed cost for this line item appears excessive. Applicant must provide a clear explanation of how these costs were calculated and demonstrate that they are reasonable relative to the Project Deliverables. Recording calls for one week is not sufficient to support a claim that each staff member spends 25% of their time on the phone with OHV users over the course of an entire year. Any time not assisting OHV users is an ineligible Project expense. Applicant must attach additional documentation to the Final Application to justify this level of staff time.
- Contract #1 “Green Sticker Road and Trail maintenance” – The proposed cost for this line item appears excessive. Applicant must provide a clear explanation of how the contract cost was determined, including the precise scope, location, and amount of miles to be maintained in the narrative of this line item. In addition, Applicant must attach a copy of the supporting contract quote to the final Application submission.
- Contract #3 “Shade Structures” – Compared to like Projects, the proposed cost for this line item appears excessive. Applicant must provide a clear explanation of how the contract cost was determined, including the precise scope and location of the structures. In addition, Applicant must update Project Deliverable #4 to accurately reflect the work associated with this line item and attach a copy of the supporting contract quote to the final Application submission.

- Contracts #4 “Archaeology trail clearance surveys” – Compared to like Projects, the proposed cost for this line item appears excessive. Applicant must provide a clear explanation of how the contract cost was determined, including the precise scope, location, and amount of work to be conducted. In their justification, Applicant must clarify the need for the trail surveys as there is no indication of new trails or roads being constructed within this Application. In addition, the proposed line items appear to be duplicative with Staff #3 “Archaeologist.” Applicant must either remove one of the line items or provide a clear explanation justifying the need for each. Furthermore, Applicant must attach a copy of the supporting contract quote to the final Application submission.
- Material / Supplies #2 “Directional Trail Signage” – Applicant must clarify the number of highway signs that will be purchased and confirm that all associated work will be completed within the Forest's jurisdiction.
- Materials / Supplies #3 “Paint supplies” – The proposed cost for this line item has increased significantly compared to the prior year's Application. Applicant must provide a detailed explanation justifying this increase and clearly demonstrate how the cost was calculated. While the Applicant has stated that the “increase request due to increased supply cost,” it is unclear how supply costs could have increased by 67% in a single year.
- Materials / Supplies #6 “Fencing, limiter, and barrier supplies” – The proposed cost for this line item has increased significantly compared to the prior year's Application. Applicant must provide a detailed explanation justifying this increase and clearly demonstrate how the cost was calculated. In addition, Applicant must provide justification for the costs associated with “boulders or woody debris” claimed as match.
- Equipment Use Expenses #1 “Vehicle Use FOR” – Compared to like Projects, the proposed cost for this line item appears excessive. Applicant must provide a clear explanation of how the cost was determined and demonstrate that it is reasonable relative to the Project Deliverables. It is unclear why 29 vehicles (trucks and ATVs) are needed over the course of the entire year relative to the amount of field Staff listed in this Application.
- Equipment Purchase #1 “Enclosed ATV trailer” – Applicant must move this line item to the “Others” cost category. In addition, it is unclear why the new enclosed trailer is necessary to accomplish the Project's deliverables as Applicant already owns five trailers as identified in its Application Equipment inventory. Applicant must further clarify why this line item is needed to accomplish the Project Deliverables.
- Indirect Costs #1 “Administration Costs” – Compared to like Projects, the proposed cost for this line item appears excessive. Applicant must provide a clear explanation of how the cost was determined, including the precise scope and amount of work to be conducted. For any Staff positions included in this line item, Applicant must utilize the hourly rate and quantity of hours as the unit of measure to clearly demonstrate how the associated costs were calculated. If helpful, Applicant may break this line item out into multiple Indirect Cost line items to clearly identify and separate the various costs. In addition, Applicant must remove the reference to “unforeseen indirect expenses” from the line item

notes, as unforeseen costs are not an allowable expense. Furthermore, the use of “etc.” in the line item notes does not provide sufficient detail to identify the items to be purchased. Applicant must specify each supply item to be purchased, as the current description does not clearly identify what materials are being requested.

Restoration: G26-02-14-R01

Project Description – Background

- The statement of “SBNF has 734 miles of level 2 roads open to sport utility/4 wheel...” appears to be inaccurate. Applicant must verify and confirm the correct mileage of level 2 roads or, alternatively, provide the accurate number of miles designated for off-highway vehicle (OHV) use. In addition, Applicant must clarify what is meant by “Collaborate w/ conservation agencies and other partners to remove noxious weeds in at least 3 popular OHV areas,” as this activity appears to be Ground Operations in nature. If these activities are determined to be Ground Operation activities, Applicant must remove all associated language and costs from this Project.

Project Description – Project Description

- The activities described as “plant propagation at all three SBNF nurseries” and “monitoring and maintenance of existing and new sites” appear to be duplicative of the Southern California Mountains Foundation R01 Project. Applicant must identify the methodology to ensure no duplication of services. Applicant must remove language and any cost associated with this activity from the Project if there is duplication of services.

Project Description – List of Project Deliverables

- #1 – It is unclear what the size of the actual active restoration area will be. Applicant must verify the accuracy of this figure or provide a revised estimate that reflects the appropriate level of active restoration associated with illegal OHV incursion. In addition, Applicant must also separately identify any areas representing anticipated future incursions and provide distinct estimates for each. Furthermore, Applicant should ensure the List of Project Deliverables is accurate and precise, listing only those Project activities that pertain to the corresponding Project Deliverable title. Applicant must relocate or remove all non-earth-moving activities (monitoring, signage, barriers, trash removal, etc.) to the correct Project Deliverable.
- #2 – Applicants must provide the anticipated number of monitoring efforts for each Project Area listed under Section D: “Size of the Specific Project Area(s)...”. In addition, Applicant should ensure the List of Project Deliverables is accurate and precise, listing only those Project activities that pertain to the corresponding Project Deliverable title. Applicant must relocate or remove all non-monitoring/patrolling activities to the correct Project Deliverable. Furthermore,

Applicant must clarify the meaning and purpose of “group enforcement,” as it appears unnecessary and potentially duplicative of activities already included in the G26 Law Enforcement Project. Applicant must justify the need for group enforcement or remove the associated language and costs from the Project if it constitutes a duplication of services.

- #3 – Due to the proximity of this Project Area to the Southern California Mountains Foundation R01 Project, Applicant must identify the methodology to ensure no duplication of services. Applicant must remove language and any cost associated with this activity from the line item if there is duplication of services.
- #4 – Applicants must provide a clear estimate of the mileage, linear feet, or other applicable measurements of fencing and/or barriers required for the Project.
- #5 – This activity is not listed in the Project Cost Estimate section. Applicant must clarify how this activity aligns with the corresponding Project Deliverable and associated costs. In addition, the statement, “monitors distribute SBNF OHV Guide Maps in green sticker areas,” appears to describe Ground Operations activities rather than Restoration activities. Applicant must provide additional information demonstrating how these activities meet Restoration Grant criteria, as well as identify the locations where public outreach and visitor services efforts will occur. If these activities are determined to be duplicative, Applicant must remove all associated language and costs from the Project budget and scope of work.
- #8– Applicant must clarify how duplication of activities within the native plant nursery will be avoided across overlapping projects and funding sources. In addition, Applicant lists two nurseries - Big Bear and Lytle Creek. Applicant must revise the Project Description and Project Cost Estimate to ensure the Project is accurate, consistent, and precise.

Project Description – All Others

- Attachments: Applicant is reminded to include Project-Specific Map(s) with sufficient detail for someone unfamiliar with the area to locate the Project site(s). The map(s) must also include valid GPS coordinates for all Project site locations. Additionally, Applicant may include map keys identifying active restoration areas, fencing/barriers, and other relevant Project features.
- (D) The size of the specific Project Area(s) in acres and/or miles – The goal of the Restoration Program is to aid the return of natural resource systems to their natural state. It is unclear whether the Project Area will be allowed to continue progressing toward natural resource recovery or whether it will remain open to other non-OHV recreational uses such as camping or horseback riding. Applicant must provide a clearly defined and accurate estimate of the actual Project Area, and this estimate must align with the Project Deliverables. In addition, it is unclear what the total size is of the areas proposed for monitoring and patrolling, including both the active restoration sites under this Project and any additional areas, such as newly fenced sites. Applicant must identify the location and acreage and/or miles of all areas that will require monitoring or patrolling upon completion of restoration work, and must separately identify the size and location

of any additional areas outside these restoration sites, including past restoration areas and any newly proposed areas vulnerable to OHV incursions.

Project Cost Estimate

- All Staff Line Items – The percentage of staff time allocated to Project Deliverables is unclear. Applicant must clarify what portion of each staff member's time will be dedicated to active restoration, monitoring, signage, fencing/barriers, public outreach, and other relevant restoration activities, such as nursery. In addition, due to recent federal staffing reductions, Applicant must confirm that all staff positions listed in this Application are currently filled prior to the final Application submission.
- Staff #1 "Restoration Biologist" – The cost seems excessive. Line item "Quantity" (QTY) significantly increased compared to the G23 Restoration Project and is excessive. Applicant must provide additional details to justify the increase in QTY.
- Staff #2 "Restoration Technician" – Cost seems excessive. Applicant must adjust staffing hours and costs to reflect only the time necessary for eligible OHV-related tasks. In addition, Applicant must identify the methodology to ensure no duplication of services. Additionally, Applicant may only request monies to support two nurseries and must revise.
- Staff #3 "Restoration Field Staff" – Applicant's narrative and line item do not match. Applicant must revise the narrative or line item.
- Staff #4 "Archaeologist Monitor" – Line item "Quantity" (QTY) significantly increased compared to the G23 Restoration Project. Applicant must provide additional details to justify the increase in QTY.
- Staff #5 "Green Thumbs Volunteers" – The scope of work for this position requires further clarification. Specifically, it is not evident how this role directly contributes to the completion of the Project, nor how its responsibilities are different from those of other staff line items.
- Contracts #1 "Conservation Crew" – It is unclear how the cost was determined. Applicant must clarify how this cost was determined and provide a detailed breakdown. In addition, Applicant must identify the conservation crew with whom they intend to contract.
- Contracts #2 "Invasive species removal" – Applicant must clarify why a separate contract is proposed for invasive species removal when this activity is already included under Contract #1 "Conservation Crew." In addition, Applicant must identify the conservation crew with whom they intend to contract.
- Materials / Supplies #6 "Tow behind cultivator and seeding tools" – Applicant must move the line item to the Other cost category.
- Equipment Use Expenses #1-3 – Applicant is reminded that Equipment fuel (use) expenses are reimbursed based on actual cost, not per-mile charge. If applicable, Applicant must describe in the notes section how fuel (use) costs were determined (a per-mile charge provided for the methodology would be acceptable) and change the unit of measurement to "Each" or "Miscellaneous." Furthermore, compared to similar Projects, the cost appears excessive. Applicant must provide additional details to justify the cost of this line item.

- Equipment Use Expenses #1 “Vehicle Fuel Jeep” – Applicant must provide additional information explaining how the line item will be used in the Project.
- Equipment Use Expenses #4-6 – Compared to like Projects, the proposed cost for this line item appears excessive. Applicant must provide a clear explanation of how the cost was determined and demonstrate that it is reasonable relative to Project Deliverables. In addition, Applicant may charge a Use fee and fuel only. If the line items are a Use fee Applicant must revise the title and description and remove “operating.”
- Others #2 “Fuel for Heavy Equipment and UTV” – Applicant must move the line item to the Equipment Use Cost category.
- Indirect Costs #1 “Biologist/Botanist” – The line item appears duplicative of the line item listed for Staff #1 “Restoration Biologist.” Applicant must clarify whether they are different or the same. If they are the same, Applicant should explain why separate line items are necessary and how the associated costs differ. In addition, this line-item cost appears excessive. Applicant must provide additional details to justify the cost of this line item.
- Indirect Costs #2 “Grant Manager” – Applicant must revise the quantity (QTY) and rate and/or clarify how the cost was determined.