

EFFECTIVENESS MONITORING COMMITTEEP.O. Box 944246
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GRANTS
PORTAL**

**EFFECTIVENESS MONITORING PROGRAM GRANT GUIDELINES
FISCAL YEAR 2024–2025 REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**
Initial Project Concept Proposals Due Wednesday, May 15, 2024

**Effectiveness Monitoring Committee
State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection**

I. EFFECTIVENESS MONITORING COMMITTEE PROGRAM SUMMARY

The Effectiveness Monitoring Committee (EMC) is an advisory body to the State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection (Board), intended to fund robust scientific research aimed at testing the efficacy of the California Forest Practice Rules (FPRs) and other natural resource protection statutes, laws, codes, and associated regulations. The EMC creates an active feedback loop to policymakers, managers, agencies, and the public by facilitating the transfer of research results to inform policy by working with Project Investigators to produce white papers, publish scientific reports and journal articles, and present policy implications to the Board for consideration. The FPRs and related policies and regulations address a variety of natural resource issues including, but not limited to, watershed science, wildlife concerns, and wildfire hazard. As a result, projects funded by the EMC span a wide array of topics and approaches but are generally focused on timberlands and rangelands in California, consistent with the Board's jurisdiction.

The EMC is seeking project proposals that:

- (1) Address one or more of the [EMC's Research Themes and Critical Monitoring Questions](#)¹ and;
- (2) Address **natural resource protection issues** that are important for **California forestlands**.

The **Critical Monitoring Questions** are organized under 12 Research Themes:

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Watercourse and Lake Protection Zone (WLPZ) riparian function | 7. Wildlife habitat: species and nest sites |
| 2. Watercourse channel sediment | 8. Wildlife habitat: seral stages |
| 3. Road and WLPZ sediment | 9. Wildlife habitat: cumulative impacts |
| 4. Mass wasting sediment | 10. Wildlife habitat: structures |
| 5. Fish habitat | 11. Hardwood values |
| 6. Wildfire hazard | 12. Climate and wildfire resilience |

¹ <https://bof.fire.ca.gov/media/nmfbkuub/research-themes-and-critical-monitoring-questions.pdf>

Projects that address multiple [EMC's Research Themes and Critical Monitoring Questions](#)² within a given theme will generally be ranked higher than those that only address a single theme and critical monitoring question, particularly if the projects align with the EMC's prioritized Critical Monitoring Questions (CMQs) for the funding year. Up to six prioritized CMQs are determined by vote amongst the current EMC members at the beginning of each calendar year.

While any compelling research that addresses EMC Research Themes and/or CMQs are eligible for funding, the EMC has identified FOUR (4) priority thematic questions for Fiscal Year (FY) 2024/25 funding:

Are the FPRs and associated regulations effective in...

- ... managing WLPZs to reduce or minimize potential fire behavior and rate of spread? (**Question 1h**)
- ... managing fuel loads, vegetation patterns and fuel breaks for fire hazard reduction? (**Question 6c**)
- ... managing forest structure and stocking standards to promote wildfire resilience? (**Question 6d**)
- ... improving overall forest wildfire resilience and the ability of forests to respond to climate change (e.g., in response to drought or bark beetle; reducing plant water stress) and variability, and extreme weather events (evaluate ecosystem functional response to fuel reduction and forest health treatments)? (**Question 12a**)

Further, the EMC encourages proposals that address Research Themes and Critical Monitoring Questions that have not been addressed by previously funded projects.

[Refer to this page](#)³ for a full listing of past and existing EMC projects (EMC-Supported Monitoring Projects table at the bottom of the webpage), and see the [Crosswalk](#)⁴ identifying links between previously funded projects and the [EMC's Research Themes and CMQs](#).² Note, projects addressing CMQs outside of the prioritized questions will also be considered for EMC funding.

II. FUNDING AVAILABILITY

Funding available for **newly proposed** projects is anticipated as follows: **\$973,392 over three FYs beginning in 2024/25, comprising: \$173,232 in FY 2024/25; \$375,160 in FY 2025/26; and \$425,000 in FY 2025/26.**

² <https://bof.fire.ca.gov/media/nmfbkuub/research-themes-and-critical-monitoring-questions.pdf>

³ <https://bof.fire.ca.gov/board-committees/effectiveness-monitoring-committee/>

⁴ <https://bof.fire.ca.gov/media/yojdtg0j/projects-and-cmq-matrix-2024-01.pdf>

III. AWARD LIMITATIONS

Applicants requesting more than the stated annual amount available for funding will not be considered. In the case that EMC funding for the full three years is awarded to one new project, project solicitation may not occur in the subsequent two FYs. While the EMC may choose to fund projects that span multiple FYs up to the annual funding cap, the EMC generally prefers to fund multiple research projects annually. Proposers should keep this in mind when developing their project and annual budget requests. Longer-term projects (greater than three years) may re-apply for funding for additional years through the competitive grants process advertised in the EMC’s Request for Proposals.

Given funding availability described in the previous section, annual allocations will be dependent upon demonstrated progress towards project completion pursuant to the project schedule and workplan. For multi-year projects, project status will be reviewed annually prior to encumbrance of award funding allocated to subsequent year(s) of the project to ensure that satisfactory progress has been made towards the objectives and deliverables as stated in the project proposal and scope of work.

To receive EMC approval, all eligible costs must be incurred during the project period as defined by the start and end date shown on the grant award. Any pre-award costs incurred prior to the start of the project period are incurred by the applicant and will not be reimbursed.

IV. TIMELINE AND DEADLINES

A general timeline for review of EMC project proposals and funding decisions is as follows:

Table 1. Approximate Timeline for Effectiveness Monitoring Committee Project Proposal Submission and Administration. * Subject to change *

Mar 2024	May 2024	June 2024	Jul 2024	Aug 2024	Sept 2024	Dec 2024
Solicitation of Project Proposals released	Initial Concept Proposals due	EMC will review and request Full Project Proposals	Full Project Proposals due	EMC will rank projects and recommend funding	EMC will notify applicants; grants developed	Funds dispersed; project work begins

The Initial Concept Proposal for the 2024/2025 FY is due in May (see **Table 1**). If endorsed, the EMC will request a more detailed Full Project Proposal generally within a week of review at a public meeting, and which will generally be due in June or July on the date provided in the email notification.

V. ELIGIBILITY

All applications will be screened for eligibility. Applications must be complete and submitted by an eligible applicant. Applicants or applications that do not meet these criteria will not be eligible for award.

A. ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

Eligible projects will be effectiveness monitoring projects which test one or more specific FPRs or other rule or regulation under the Board's jurisdiction and which addresses one or more of the [EMC's Research Themes and CMQs](#).⁵

Proposed projects must clearly apply to management activities on private timberlands in California. Projects on public land may be eligible for EMC funding provided they clearly apply to the activities and systems that also exist on non-federal timberland.

B. ELIGIBLE ORGANIZATIONS

Eligible applicants are local, state, and federal agencies including federal land management agencies; institutions of higher education; special purpose districts (e.g., public utilities districts, fire districts, conservation districts, and ports); Native American tribes; private landowners; for-profit entities; and non-profit 501(c)(3) organizations (e.g., fire safe councils, land trusts).

C. PROJECT SCALE

Proposed projects should focus on large, landscape-scale forestlands composed of one or more landowners, which may cover multiple jurisdictions. Proposed projects that have a wide geographic scope or a wide applicability of results within the State are preferred.

D. PROJECT READINESS

Eligible projects awarded in the 2024/25 FY must complete all grant-related work by no later than **March 31, 2027**.

E. TRANSPARENCY AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

All proposals, requests for funding, ranking results, and related project materials will be made publicly available on the [EMC's website](#).⁶ Final results and data from EMC-approved projects will also be publicly available.

If an EMC member is the principal investigator or a collaborator on a proposed project, the EMC member will recuse themselves from ranking that project or participating in funding recommendations for that project. Applicants and EMC members shall disclose to the EMC any potential financial or non-financial conflicts of interests related to the proposal, including direct or indirect financial or non-financial relationships with the

⁵ <https://bof.fire.ca.gov/media/nmfbkuub/research-themes-and-critical-monitoring-questions.pdf>

⁶ <https://bof.fire.ca.gov/board-committees/effectiveness-monitoring-committee/>

EMC, Board, Department, or applicants. The EMC member with the potential conflict of interest will abstain from voting on any items that relate to the conflict and avoid influencing any related decision.

For-profit organizations or entities that could benefit (either directly or indirectly) financially from the proposed project outcomes may only participate as an in-kind contributor and may not participate in any activities or analyses that result in project findings or outcomes. For-profit organizations or individuals must clearly detail their role(s) in the proposed research, such as in-kind contributions of labor, equipment, or access to land. All research activities related to the collecting or analyzing data or reporting on the results must be performed by research institutions or individuals affiliated with such institutions.

VI. APPLICATION SUBMISSION INFORMATION

A. APPLICATION

Initial Concept Proposals are solicited annually in May. Applicants must submit a project description using the components shown in the [“Initial Concept Proposal” template](#)⁷ found on the [EMC’s website](#).⁸ The Initial Concept Proposal is due in May (see **Table 1**). This information may also be found by searching for the “Effectiveness Monitoring Committee” on the [California Grants Portal](#).⁹ Please be advised that while applicants are encouraged to reference past accepted projects on the [EMC’s website](#),⁸ previous years’ proposals may not adhere to the current formatting or submission standards.

If endorsed, the EMC will request a [“Full Project Proposal”](#)¹⁰ generally in June, which will generally be due in July on the date provided in the email notification. The Full Project Proposal must include additional project information and a detailed Budget broken down by year. The EMC will evaluate the project and consider it for final approval and funding recommendations to the Board. All sections of the templates must be filled out and may be broken into further subsections if necessary. There is no page requirement or page limit for the Full Project Proposal. All information necessary to complete an application package can be found on the California Board of Forestry and Fire Protection [EMC’s website](#),⁸ with further details described below.

B. CONTENT AND FORM OF APPLICATION SUBMISSION

Note, while not required in the Initial Concept Proposal, please ensure Your agency, business, or organization has an active registration in the [System for Award Management](#)¹¹ (SAM). **The approval process for a new or renewal**

⁷ <https://bof.fire.ca.gov/media/9176/concept-proposal-template-6419-ada.pdf>

⁸ <https://bof.fire.ca.gov/board-committees/effectiveness-monitoring-committee/>

⁹ <https://www.grants.ca.gov/>

¹⁰ <https://bof.fire.ca.gov/media/9175/clean-full-project-proposal-template-6419-ada.pdf>

¹¹ <https://sam.gov/content/home>

SAM's registration can take several months. Please plan accordingly. You must include a screenshot of the SAM registration page in the application appendices to be eligible for an award. See Item B-f-vii, below, for additional information.

- i. **Initial Concept Proposal**. The proposal package must include all information listed below. See the sample template provided on the [EMC's website](#).¹² Complete applications must be received by **Wednesday, May 15, 2024** at 5:00 pm PDT (see **Table 1**). Any documents submitted separately will not be accepted or considered. Proposals will NOT be accepted by fax machine or hard copy. Information on how to submit your proposal is found in **Section IX. Proposal Submission and Contact Information**. Components that must be included in the Initial Concept Proposal are as follows:

- a. **Date Submitted**

- b. **Project Title**

- c. **Project #** (leave blank; to be assigned by EMC)

- d. **Principal Investigator(s) (PI)**

- e. **Affiliation(s) of PI(s) and Address(es)**

- f. **Applying Organization**

- g. **Primary Contact Phone Number(s)**

- h. **Primary Email Contact(s) of PI(s)**

- i. **Name(s) and Affiliation(s) of Collaborator(s)**

- j. **Project Description. In not more than 2,000 words**, provide a problem statement, research question, description of methods, including analysis and interpretation, and identified monitoring location(s). Include:

- i) **Project Duration** (Years/Months)

- ii) **Background and Justification**

- iii) **Objectives and Scope**

- iv) **Research Methods**. Describe the methods for collecting, analyzing, and interpreting the data.

- v) **Scientific Uncertainty and Geographic Application**. Please consult Section 3.1 of the [EMC's Strategic Plan](#)¹³ for further information.

Indicate the specific geographic locations, counties, or regions of the state to which this project may have benefits; if benefits are anticipated to apply across the state, indicate "Statewide". If the benefits are also anticipated to occur outside of the state, please explain. Projects may occur on sites under any kind of land ownership.

¹² <https://bof.fire.ca.gov/board-committees/effectiveness-monitoring-committee/>

¹³ <https://bof.fire.ca.gov/media/9122/2018-emc-strategic-plan-ada.pdf>

vi) Collaborations and Project Feasibility.

- k. Critical Question Theme and Forest Practice Rules or Regulations Addressed.** Please identify the Critical Questions by number and letter (as identified in the [EMC's Research Themes and CMQs](#))¹⁴, and the associated regulations by number. Please also describe how your project will address these questions and the efficacy of each regulation.
- l. Requested Funding.** Please provide the total amount of funding requested from the EMC, broken down by year of expenditure (by FY, i.e., from July 1 through June 30 of each year), with a brief justification of costs not to exceed 200 words.
- ii. Full Project Proposal.** If the project proposal is endorsed for Full Proposal submission, the Project Proponent will be notified generally in June that the "[Full Project Proposal](#)"¹⁵ will generally be due in July *on the date provided in the email notification*. Applicants must submit all parts of the application **in one email**, including any tables, figures, or photos as needed. **Incomplete applications will not be considered.** The EMC may require specific or additional clarifying information in its request for a Full Project Proposal.
- a. Project Details.** Building upon to the information provided in the Initial Concept Proposal, please provide any additional details for all items described in *Items B-i-j* (Project Description) **through B-i-l** (Requested Funding), above.
- b. Project Deliverables.** Project deliverables serve an important role in ensuring state grant funding is spent appropriately. Describe in a table the anticipated products that would be produced as a result of this research, including presentations, scientific papers, technical reports, analytical methods, or other products utilized to provide scientific translation of the research results. Include a timeline for when each item would be delivered to the EMC.
- c. Detailed Project Timeline.** Include the approximate months and years at which critical data sampling, analyses, or presentations will occur. The PI(s) will work with EMC project liaison(s) and Board staff to ensure critical steps are completed and deliverables are produced as indicated in the proposal. The PI(s) will be expected to provide regular updates to the EMC on project status and preliminary results, as well as to provide final presentations to the EMC and the Board at open, public meetings, or other appropriate forums as determined in consultation with the EMC project liaison(s).
- d. Detailed Budget.** Please provide the total requested amount of funding along with a line-item budget for each FY of the project. The EMC reserves the right to request documentation supporting the reasonable need for the

¹⁴ <https://bof.fire.ca.gov/media/nmfbkuub/research-themes-and-critical-monitoring-questions.pdf>

¹⁵ <https://bof.fire.ca.gov/media/9175/clean-full-project-proposal-template-6419-ada.pdf>

expense, or to show proof of expenditure. Break each "Category" into as many sub-categories as needed to fully describe your budget.

*** Note: due to potential delays in the annual posting of the State budget on or after July 1, delays in access to funds may occur until the budget is posted and the fund encumbrance process commences. Please plan accordingly to ensure continued access to funding for up to three months following July 1 by including the anticipated budgetary need in the previous FY ending June 30. ***

- i) **Total Costs.** Sum of items in **Table 2**, below.
- ii) **Matching or In-Kind Contributions** – if any
- iii) **TOTAL EMC Funding Requested**

See page 2 of the [“Full Project Proposal” template](#)¹⁶ for an example table format with a year-by-year breakdown and total. Review the descriptions of items in Table 2, below, and potential forms of documentation that may be required upon submission of invoices to the EMC:

Table 2. Budget Items, Eligible Costs, and Documentation.

Eligible Cost	Documentation
Personnel Salaries and Wages	
Identify all personnel costs including field technicians, graduate students, Principal Investigators, etc. Show these values as individual rates per unit of time. Include salaries and wages of employees employed by the grantee who are DIRECTLY engaged in the execution of the grant project. Limited to actual time spent on the grant project. Examples of expenditures include time related to site visits and project monitoring, and completion of reporting related to the grant project.	Timesheets or similar documentation detailing days and hours worked on the project may be required to support invoicing. If requested, payroll documentation should show a nexus between time worked on the project and wages paid to the employee after the fact.

¹⁶ <https://bof.fire.ca.gov/media/9175/clean-full-project-proposal-template-6419-ada.pdf>

Table 3, Continued.

Eligible Cost	Documentation
Fringe Benefits	
<p>Cite as actual benefits or a percentage of personnel costs. Include only the employer contribution share of fringe benefits associated with employees (paid from salaries and wages Budget Item) who are directly engaged in the execution of the grant project. This will include Social Security, Medicare, Health Insurance, Pension Plan costs, etc. as applicable for the specific employee.</p>	<p>Same documentation as Salaries and Wages. If requested, payroll documentation showing wages and hours paid to the employee and associated fringe benefits.</p>
Contractual Expenses	
<p>Direct consultant and contractual services necessary to achieve the objectives of the grant. Examples of contractual costs will be RPF supervision/certification, professional/consultant services (the costs of consultant services necessary for project planning and implementation), fire prevention contractor, etc. Procurement of contractual services should be documented to ensure selection on a competitive basis and documentation of price analysis.</p>	<p>Invoices from Consultant/Contractor identifying expenditure, services performed and period of services. Documents related to consultant/contractor selection analysis shall be kept by the grantee but available for audit purposes.</p>
Travel	
<p>Express as per diem rates specified by CalHR,¹⁷ or verification that such rates are not available to you, such as applying entities travel policies and rates. Travel cost associated with travel to and from project sites, meetings, etc. directly related to the grant project and must be considered reasonable and necessary for the completion of the project. Reimbursement rates shall be consistent with the grantee's written travel policy.</p>	<p>Receipts identifying travel cost (i.e. lodging, rental cars). Mileage must be documented by either employee travel claims signed by the employee or vehicle mileage logs for vehicles owned by the grantee. Per Diem must be documented by employee travel claims. The EMC reserves the right to request a copy of the applying entities' written travel policies.</p>

¹⁷ <https://hrmanual.calhr.ca.gov/Home/ManualItem/1/2203>

Table 4, Continued.

Eligible Cost	Documentation
Operating Expenses	
<p>Include supplies and equipment costs as separate line items. Includes Supplies that are used in the direct support of the project. Equipment is an item exceeding \$5,000 or more per unit cost and has a tangible useful life of more than one year. Cost to lease equipment to use in the grant project may be charged to the grant. Use of equipment owned by the grantee may be charged to the grant at a rate set by the California Department of Transportation "Labor Surcharge and Equipment Rental Rate" guide. Grantee must include in the application package the proposed use and maintenance plans for equipment after the performance period of the grant. Disposition of equipment beyond the project performance period is subject to EMC approval; the EMC may elect to reimburse for a portion of the equipment, subject to adjustments for depreciation and the period of time that the equipment will be used in direct association with execution of the grant project.</p>	<p>Supplies exceeding \$500 per unit cost shall be documented to ensure procurement of supplies on a competitive basis and documentation of price analysis. A cost-benefit analysis to justify the cost of purchasing equipment versus leasing may be requested by the EMC. Cost of leased equipment charged to the grant must be substantiated with receipts identifying equipment leased, dates of lease, lease rate, and total cost. Usage of grantee equipment may be required to substantiate use, including an equipment usage log, equipment used, rate, and total rental cost. Cost of equipment purchased shall be substantiated by purchase receipt. Disposition of the equipment must be approved by the EMC in writing at the end of the grant term. The EMC reserves the right to deny equipment costs that are not deemed reasonable or necessary to execute the grant project.</p>
Other Costs	
<p>Other costs (such as rent, utilities, phones, general office supplies, etc.) that do not fit in any of the above categories. Cost must be directly related to the grant project.</p>	<p>Invoices or receipts identifying the item and cost charged to the grant.</p>

Table 5, Continued.

Eligible Cost	Documentation
Indirect Costs	
<p>Costs associated with doing business that are of a general nature and are incurred to benefit two or more functions within the grantee organization. These costs are not usually identified specifically within the grant agreement, project, or activity, but are necessary for the general operation of the organization. Examples include salaries and benefits of employees not directly assigned to a project; functions such as personnel, accounting, budgeting, audits, business services, information technology, janitorial, and salaries of supervisors and managers; and rent, utilities, supplies, etc. Functions included as direct versus indirect costs must be applied consistently for all activities within the grantee organization, regardless of fund source.</p>	<p>Documentation related to the determination of the grantee's indirect cost rate may be requested by the EMC and must be retained by the grantee for audit purposes.</p> <p>Not to exceed 15%. Additionally, only one professor's summer salary may be included in funding requests. Indirect costs are applied as a percentage of Direct Costs. Indirect costs may not be applied to equipment purchases.</p>

e. Ineligible Costs. The following are ineligible for reimbursement under the grant:

- i) Costs incurred before or after the Project Performance Period.
- ii) Cost of preparing the Project Application or other grant proposals.
- iii) Overtime, sick time, paid time off or vacation pay for employees and/or contractors. Overtime hours will be reimbursed at the straight time rate.
- iv) Projects or activities utilizing EMC staff without corresponding reimbursements or requests seeking funding for services already provided by EMC.
- v) Late fees, penalties, and bank fees.
- vi) Any indirect costs applied as a percentage of equipment purchase costs.

f. Additional Required Forms

- i) **Employer Identification Number (EIN).** Non-profit applicants shall provide Articles of Incorporation including the Seal from the Secretary of State. Business applicants shall provide proof of active business registration with the California Secretary of State.
- ii) **Letters of Support.** If collaborations or partnerships are noted in the proposal, letter of support or other forms of evidence that partners are aware of and in support of the proposed project should be provided. Applicants may work cooperatively with local partners to implement projects and achieve an outcome that is larger than the sum of the individual projects that may have been undertaken by each partnering

organization independently. Applicants should clearly indicate what work will be completed with partners with funds from this solicitation if partnerships are noted.

- iii) **Sample Resolution.** If nonprofit or local agency, please provide a Sample Resolution (see [example](#)¹⁸).
- iv) **Nondiscrimination Compliance Statement** – [Form Std 19](#)¹⁹
- v) **Drug-Free Workplace Certification** – [Form Std 21](#)²⁰
- vi) **Payee Data Record** – [Form Std 204](#)²¹
- vii) **System for Award Management** – Your agency, business, or organization must have an active registration in the [System for Award Management](#)²² (SAM) to apply. Active registration must be maintained throughout the life of the award. You must include a screenshot of the SAM registration page in the application appendices to be eligible for an award.

VII. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

A. EVALUATION CRITERIA

The EMC will conduct a preliminary technical review of all Initial Concept Proposals that are received by the due date. This review will consider the completeness of the proposals and whether they fall under the FPRs and/or associated regulations and are within the scope of the [EMC's Research Themes and CMQs](#).²³ The EMC will work with Board staff to screen proposals for any conflicts of interest. The EMC may request the Principal Investigator to provide additional information within a reasonable period. When the EMC determines that an Initial Concept is complete and within scope, it will invite the Principal Investigator to submit a Full Project Proposal by a specified date, typically in June.

Full Project Proposals will be evaluated by the EMC using the ranking criteria and approach outlined in Section 4.2 of the [EMC 2022 Strategic Plan](#).²⁴ When a Full Project Proposal is deemed complete and ready for ranking, EMC members will rank the proposal according to the ranking process. EMC members will individually rank each project and the average ranking score will be calculated for each project. No specific minimum average ranking score is required for support; rather, individual project scores will be considered relative to other project scores, and will be considered in addition to other factors, including annually-prioritized research foci of the EMC.

¹⁸ <https://tinyurl.com/524tw58m>

¹⁹ <https://www.documents.dgs.ca.gov/dgs/fmc/pdf/std019.pdf>

²⁰ <https://www.documents.dgs.ca.gov/dgs/fmc/pdf/std021.pdf>

²¹ <https://www.documents.dgs.ca.gov/dgs/fmc/pdf/std204.pdf>

²² <https://sam.gov/content/home>

²³ <https://bof.fire.ca.gov/media/nmfbkuub/research-themes-and-critical-monitoring-questions.pdf>

²⁴ <https://bof.fire.ca.gov/media/vaffvb42/2022-emc-strategic-plan-final.pdf>

Once all Full Project Proposals for the annual project cycle have been ranked, the EMC members will vote to make recommendations for allocation of available EMC funds to the Proposals, taking into consideration the project ranking score, how well the project tests the effectiveness of the FPRs, and the reasonableness of the requested budget. The EMC may decide to recommend funding a proposal in full, in part, or not at all. Ranking results will be posted on the [EMC's website](#)²⁵ and applicants will be notified of the results and receive comments from the EMC. The EMC will generally complete the review of Full Project Proposals and make any funding recommendations for FY 2024/25 at the fall public meeting.

It is the intent of the EMC to keep the ranking process transparent, with the ranking done in an easily trackable manner. The ranking will take place during regular, public meetings of the EMC. Thereafter, both the written notes of the public meeting and ranking results are published on the Board's website. Project Principal Investigators will be notified of their project ranking, and any comments regarding their project referred to them from the Committee.

Preference may be given to projects based on the following factors, which are used to rank the proposed projects:

i. Critical Questions

Projects that address multiple EMC critical themes and multiple critical questions within a given theme will be ranked higher than those that only address a single theme and critical question, particularly if the projects align with the EMC's prioritized critical questions in that funding year. Five to six prioritized critical questions are determined by vote amongst the current EMC members at the beginning of each calendar year. Among the 12 above referenced themes, the EMC has prioritized four thematic questions for FY 2024/25, **though this shall not exclude compelling thematic questions posed outside of those four questions. See Section 1, Page 1 for the list of the four prioritized questions.**

All thematic questions associated with each of the 12 themes are listed in the [EMC's Research Themes and CMQs](#).²⁶ Projects must describe how the study design and methods will adequately address the proposed critical question(s).

ii. Scientific Uncertainty

Projects will be ranked higher when our current scientific understanding of forest practice effectiveness in the FPRs and associated regulations is incomplete. A goal is to promote projects that address large gaps in the knowledge of the effectiveness of the FPRs and associated statutes and regulations. Projects should propose to investigate high priority critical monitoring themes, as detailed in the [EMC's Research Themes and CMQs](#).²⁶

²⁵ <https://bof.fire.ca.gov/board-committees/effectiveness-monitoring-committee/>

²⁶ <https://bof.fire.ca.gov/media/nmfbkuub/research-themes-and-critical-monitoring-questions.pdf>

iii. Geographic Application

Proposed projects that have broad application throughout California forestlands both public and private will be ranked higher than those with application limited to a specific geomorphic region or sub-region. Projects need not be physically located in California to produce findings that apply to multiple areas in the state.

iv. Collaboration & Feasibility

Projects will receive higher ranking when they have a broad array of collaborative partners involved with substantive expertise in the proposed study. This is to encourage multidisciplinary approaches in the proposals. Project proponents are encouraged to collaborate with state and federal agencies, universities, private industry, NGOs, watershed groups, etc. Past performance in delivering timely, acceptable monitoring reports within available budgets will be considered.

Projects will be evaluated by each EMC member within each of the above Evaluation Criteria. Each Evaluation Criteria will be assigned a Ranking of 1 to 5, as described in Figure 1, below. Each project will be individually ranked within each of the four Evaluation Criteria—with the ranking for Scientific Uncertainty multiplied by a factor of 2—and the total score will be calculated by summing rankings across the categories. The final ranking score is based on the average of all total scores as ranked by each EMC member for each project. The maximum score possible is 25; the minimum score possible is 5. No specific minimum average ranking score is required for support.

On an ordinal scale of 1 to 5, with a Ranking of 5 being the most desirable, reviewers should refer to the following guidance when reviewing any category:

- 1 = Does not meet any portion of the Evaluation Criteria**
- 2 = Does not meet key portions of the Evaluation Criteria**
- 3 = May meet some portions of the Evaluation Criteria, either key or ancillary**
- 4 = Meets key portions of the Evaluation Criteria and does not address ancillary portions**
- 5 = Meets all portions of the Evaluation Criteria**

Note: the ranking and scoring system is utilized to inform the EMC members as they determine projects to support. **A higher relative ranking does not ensure a funding recommendation from the EMC, as the EMC reserves the right to allocate funding based on a variety of factors, including but not limited to, the ranking, current priorities and needs, and distribution and availability of funding across FYs.**

v. EMC Funding Request

The amount requested is not a ranking criterion. The proposed monitoring projects need to describe existing collaboration and funding that will ensure achieving goals and objectives of monitoring.

B. REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS

Applications will be evaluated against the criteria listed in the Evaluation Criteria subsection, above. All applications will be screened to ensure compliance with the requirements as set forth in these grant guidelines. Applications that do not follow the

directions for submission or that are incomplete will not be considered. Proposals will be evaluated for merit and assigned a Ranking using criteria listed in this document. If the highest-ranking proposals are equally ranked, the top-ranking proposal(s) that in combination best align(s) with the current FY preferences will be chosen.

Newly awarded projects are subject to funding limits based on previous-year allocations, and previously allocated funds in upcoming years will be considered during the EMC’s review of new proposals each year. ***The Board will make the final funding decision.***

C. ANTICIPATED ANNOUNCEMENT AND AWARD DATE

Approximate or actual deadline	Action
March 2024	Anticipated Issuance of Request for Proposals
May 15, 2024	Initial Project Proposal submission deadline
June 2024	Approximate month for Initial Concept Proposal assessment at public meeting; Full Project Proposals will be requested from Project Proponents
July 2024	Approximate month of deadline for Full Project Proposal submission on selected proposals
August 2024	Approximate month for Full Project Proposal assessment at public meeting
September 2024	Approximate month of award announcement
December 2024	Approximate date of award and work begins
March 31, 2027	Work must be completed
April 30, 2027	Last day to submit invoices
June 30, 2027	Deadline for final project report and deliverables

VIII. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

A. AWARD NOTICES

Applicants will be notified by email about funding decisions in approximately the month of September.

B. REPORTING AND DELIVERABLES

The EMC requires periodic updates, field tours, scientific reports, published journal articles, and/or other relevant deliverables during the life of the project. The EMC also encourages education and outreach events for the public. Specific reporting requirements are detailed below:

i. Project Reporting

Agency staff, assigned EMC project liaison(s), and EMC staff will work closely with the PI(s) to manage the current and ongoing project workload. Project liaisons will report on progress at each public EMC meeting, approximately 4 times per year. Co-chairs will brief the Board during EMC advisory committee updates as needed.

a. Annual and Final Reporting

- i) ***Status and Progress Reports.*** Principal Investigators will provide at least written bi-annual updates on project status and progress by no later than **June 30th** and **December 31st** of each year. Verbal reports may be requested by the EMC at public committee meetings.
- ii) ***EMC Scientific Reports.*** Principal Investigators will synthesize the results into final reports for the EMC. The reports shall include descriptions of purpose and need, scientific methods, results and technical analysis, evaluation of implications for resources and forest management operations, and disclosure of any possible limitations of results and any scientific uncertainty. The reports shall not provide policy or regulatory recommendations, other than ideas for potential further refinement of study methods to address any significant limitations and remaining scientific uncertainty. All final reports will be made available to the public on the EMC webpage. All reports shall discuss the statistical, physical and biological relevance of the monitoring and results.

Due to relatively small sample sizes and lack of controls for both dependent and independent variables associated with “specific question” studies, statistically rigorous testing of water quality, aquatic habitat and wildlife resource questions is often difficult. However, well developed resource monitoring questions can improve scientific monitoring designs so that they limit spurious results and enhance the range of inference. Both statistical and biological relevance of the monitoring and the resulting acceptable level of scientific uncertainty should be clearly stated in each monitoring proposal and final report. Development of possible rule language options based on results and findings of EMC reports, if necessary, shall be proposed by or brought before the Board’s Forest Practice Committee (FPC) for review and comment prior to submittal to the full Board.

- iii) ***Completed Research Assessment.*** The EMC’s [Completed Research Assessment](#)²⁷ should be consulted to ensure the final deliverables meet the EMC’s high standards for scientific integrity, and to ensure a strong link from research to policy and practice. The PI may be consulted by EMC members as they complete this document, which will be presented

²⁷ https://bof.fire.ca.gov/media/wktpsaxf/emc-completed-research-assessment_ada.pdf

to the EMC by the EMC members that complete it for review and potential revision. This document will also be presented to the Board of Forestry and Fire Protection for final assessment of the completed project, and revisions may be requested by the Board.

b. Required Statements on All Documents, Publications, Audiovisual Material, and Electronic Media

The following statement needs to be included on all documents, publications, audiovisual material, electronic media, and related informational pieces for public distribution that result from projects funded by the EMC:

“This work was funded in whole (or in part) through a grant from the California State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection Effectiveness Monitoring Committee.”

c. Publication Requirements

Pursuant to [California Assembly Bill No. 2192 \(“The California Taxpayer Access to Publicly Funded Research Act”\)](#)²⁸, a grantee that receives funding, in whole or in part, in the form of a research grant from a state agency shall provide for free public access to any publication of a peer-reviewed manuscript describing state-agency-funded knowledge, a state-agency-funded invention, or state-agency-funded technology. Forest Health Program grantees must ensure that an electronic version of peer-reviewed manuscripts is available to BOF EMC and on an appropriate publicly accessible repository approved by BOF EMC including, but not limited to, the University of California’s eScholarship Repository at the California Digital Library, or the California State University’s ScholarWorks at the Systemwide Digital Library. Grantees must report to BOF EMC the final disposition of any peer-reviewed manuscripts arising from the grant work, including, but not limited to, if it was published, date of publication, where it was published, and, after a 12-month time period from official date of publication, where the peer-reviewed manuscript will be available for open access. For other types of publications, including scientific meeting abstracts, the grantee shall comply by providing the manuscript to the BOF EMC not later than 12 months after the official date of publication.

d. Accounting Requirements

The grantee must maintain a generally accepted accounting system that accurately reflects fiscal transactions. The accounting system must provide an adequate audit trail, including original source documents, such as receipts, progress payments, invoices, purchase orders, timecards, cancelled checks, etc. The accounting system must document the total cost of the project. The grantee must maintain accounting records for one year

²⁸ https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=201720180AB2192

following the duration of the Project Performance Period or after final disposition of any disputed audit findings. Grantees are required to keep source documents for all expenditures related to each grant for at least three years following Project completion and one year following an audit.

C. PAYMENT OF GRANT FUNDS

All funding awards will be distributed through state procurement processes. Funds may be disbursed only once there is a fully executed Grant Agreement between the EMC and the grantee. Only costs incurred consistent with the approved scope of work and budget will be reimbursed. Payments will be made on a **reimbursement basis** (i.e., the grantee pays for services, products or supplies; invoices EMC for the same including supporting documentation of actual cost incurred; and the State reimburses the grantee upon approval of the invoice). No work prior to or after the grant period will be reimbursable. The invoice will then be forwarded to Sacramento Headquarters for review and subsequent approval of payment. Expect payment to be issued 45 to 60 calendar days from the time an acceptable invoice is received. If an invoice is incomplete or non-reimbursable, it will be returned to the grantee. Invoices must be timely submitted, as provided in the formal grant agreement. The grantee is responsible for reimbursing any fees incurred by EMC as a result of untimely invoice submission, including, but not limited to, a \$25 government claims processing fee and penalty of 15% of the approved invoice amount. The EMC, at its discretion, may secure reimbursement by deducting such late fees from the invoice payment.

D. PUBLICITY

Communication about all press releases, media events, activities, and reports generated by the award should be coordinated with and provided to Kristina Wolf, Environmental Scientist for the Board of Forestry and Fire Protection in advance of the event, media release, or release to the public. All materials will need to be approved by the EMC at a scheduled public meeting prior to release.

IX. PROPOSAL SUBMISSION AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Interested applicants should carefully review these grant guidelines and the [EMC's website](#).²⁹ **All Initial Concept Proposals must be received by Wednesday, May 15, 2024.** Please direct all questions and requests for further information via email. **All application materials should be submitted as one compiled file and emailed to: kristina.wolf@bof.ca.gov**

²⁹ <https://bof.fire.ca.gov/board-committees/effectiveness-monitoring-committee/>