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NEWS

For Immediate Release

February 7, 2012

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Funding Available for Forest Restoration Projects

FORT COLLINS, Colo. – Colorado landowners and communities wanting to protect forested areas from severe wildfire or other forest health concerns that ultimately impact water supplies may be eligible for grant funding from the Colorado State Forest Service.

Through March 8, the CSFS is accepting proposals for the Colorado Forest Restoration Pilot Grant Program, which helps fund projects that demonstrate a community-based approach to forest restoration. Proposals must address the protection of water supplies or related infrastructure, as well as the restoration of forested watersheds. Projects are encouraged to utilize forest products, and where feasible, involve the Colorado Youth Corps Association or an accredited Colorado Youth Corps to provide labor. Projects also should mitigate threats that affect watershed health, such as the build-up of wildland fuels that increase the risk for a severe wildfire. Large, intense wildfires negatively impact watersheds through increases in runoff and erosion, diminished water quality and accelerated loss of snowpack.

“This program encourages local stakeholders to work together to develop forest restoration proposals that address diverse forest health challenges, including community and water-supply protection, ecological restoration, forest product utilization and wildfire risk reduction,” said Jeff Jahnke, state forester and director of the CSFS.

Colorado landowners and anyone with legal authority to contract for work on relevant properties are eligible to compete for grant funding. The state can fund up to 60 percent of each awarded project; grant recipients are required to match at least 40 percent of the total project cost through cash or in-kind contributions, including federal funds. Proposed projects must be located in communities with a CSFS-approved Community Wildfire Protection Plan.

An interdisciplinary technical advisory panel, convened by the CSFS in partnership with the Colorado Department of Natural Resources, will review project applications. The CSFS will notify successful applicants by this summer.

Applications and additional information about the Colorado Forest Restoration Pilot Grant Program are available at local CSFS district offices or csfs.colostate.edu.

The CSFS is a service and outreach agency of the Warner College of Natural Resources at Colorado State University.