



# UTAH FOREST LEGACY PROGRAM

## PROJECT PRE-APPLICATIONS FOR FFY26 and IRA FFY24/25 FUNDING



The Division of Forestry, Fire and State Lands is currently accepting project pre-applications for the Forest Legacy Program (FLP) for federal fiscal year (FFY) 2026 and the project application process for the FFY 2024/25 Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) funding for the FLP. The FLP is a voluntary program that seeks to protect environmentally important private forestlands that are threatened by conversion to non-forest uses. The FLP operates on the “willing buyer, willing seller” principle and the program assures that both traditional uses of private lands and the public benefits of America's forests are protected for future generations. The goals of Utah’s FLP are to maintain forest sustainability, protect and enhance water quality and supplies, and conserve wildlife habitat while providing for continued, active forest management. The FLP uses conservation easements to protect these important forested areas.

The FLP is a highly competitive program, with only the top 10 out of 35 nationally submitted projects typically funded. Properties must be 75% forested, and have public values and strategic alignment with other protected lands. Additional information about the Forest Legacy Program may be accessed on the USDA Forest Service website at: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/managing-land/private-land/forest-legacy>

Private landowner properties located within one of the nine Utah Forest Legacy Areas are eligible to apply. Any final offer for conservation easement purchase may not exceed fair market value, as determined by federal appraisal standards. The program can provide up to 75% of the costs for the purchase of conservation easements, with a minimum 25% match requirement coming from a landowner donation or other private, state or other sources.

Landowners are strongly encouraged to work with a land trust organization to develop their project and complete the final proposal. This partnership will be imperative should the project move forward for national ranking. Applications are evaluated by the Utah Forest Stewardship Coordinating Committee with final recommendation by the State Forester. Projects are evaluated using three core criteria: *Importance*, *Threatened* and *Strategic*. The level of project *Readiness* will also be considered when ranking projects. Up to three of the highest ranked projects from the state are submitted to the regional and national ranking process for final funding consideration. Funds are awarded to successful projects approximately three years after submitting the initial pre-application, with up to an additional two years to close the project.

Please see attached information for more details on the core attributes of the FLP application process, and the eligibility and special emphasis criteria required for the IRA funding to the FLP.

**Pre-applications must be received by October 16, 2023.** Final proposals will address all of the application requirements and include maps, photos and required supporting documentation. Applicants may reapply to the Forest Legacy Program every year, however, a new application must be submitted each year.

If you have any questions about the application process, please contact:

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