



Request for Applications (RFA)

2026 CDA Noxious Weed Program Annual Grants

**Noxious Weed Management Fund (NWMF) and
USFS State & Private Forestry (SPF) Fund**

NEW FOR THE 2026 GRANT CYCLE

- [Eligible entities include:](#)
 - Counties/Municipalities
 - Special government districts (conservation, water, etc.)
 - Cooperative Weed Management Areas (CWMAs) or Weed Prevention Areas (WPAs)
- [The Application format has changed](#) (Google form instead of fillable PDF)

New items for the 2026 Grant Cycle are highlighted in yellow throughout this RFA.

About the Grant Program

This Request for Applications (RFA) is issued by the Colorado Department Agriculture (CDA), also referred to as the "State," for the benefit of the Noxious Weed Program.

Life of Project

Award Period: April 1, 2026 to May 31, 2027.

Program Objectives

The primary objectives of the Colorado Department of Agriculture (CDA) Noxious Weed Program Annual Grants are to distribute the Noxious Weed Management Fund (WMF), in compliance with Section 116 of the Colorado Noxious Weed Act Title 35. Agriculture 55 § 35-5.5, and to sub-award the funds not needed for the EDRR field crew from the annual U.S. Forest Service State and Private Forestry (SPF) grant.

The objectives of the Noxious Weed Management Fund are to:

1. Provide additional financial resources to entities that are engaged in cooperative efforts to eradicate and/or contain state-listed noxious weeds,
2. Produce measurable outcomes across Colorado for noxious weed management, and
3. Assist new or underfunded weed management programs, especially in regions where additional resources are needed.

Approximately \$450,000 of Noxious Weed Management Fund is available for this grant round.

U.S. Forest Service SPF Funds:

Approximately \$50,000 of United States Forest Service (USFS) State & Private Forestry (SPF) funding is available in addition to the Noxious Weed Fund for projects occurring in 2026. Applicants may indicate whether all, some, or none of their grant could be funded by the SPF fund in the Google Form Application.

- USFS SPF projects may not occur on federal land and must have relative proximity to National Forest Service lands.
- A 1:1 match is required for SPF funds and cannot come from federal sources.
- Grantees who receive SPF funds must keep their local USFS Representative informed of progress throughout the project.

The primary objectives of the Colorado Department of Agriculture (CDA) and United States Forest Service (USFS) collaborative State and Private Forestry (SPF) grant program are to:

1. Provide additional financial resources to local communities engaged in cooperative efforts to eradicate and/or contain state, regionally, or locally rare noxious weed species/populations,
2. To prevent high priority weed populations from advancing onto USFS property, and
3. To facilitate participation between local weed managers and National Forest land managers in a cooperative and coordinated approach to managing these high priority weed problems.

Eligibility

NEW FOR THE 2026 GRANT CYCLE

The primary focus of this grant program is to support local governing bodies, weed control districts (special government districts such as conservation and water districts), and Cooperative Weed

Management Areas (CWMAs) or Weed Prevention Areas (WPAs). These are the only eligible entities that can apply to this grant program as of the 2026 grant cycle.

Grantees must demonstrate adequate capacity to carry out effective noxious weed management projects. State and federal agencies are eligible to receive NWF (but not SPF) funding if they are significant project partners. State and federal agencies cannot be the project applicant.

All eligible entities must meet the requirements described below. All awarded funds must be used for noxious weed management efforts within the State of Colorado.

All counties and municipalities receiving grant funding must be in compliance with the Colorado Noxious Weed Act prior to reimbursement, specifically the following:

1. Adopt and actively administer a noxious weed management plan covering the entire jurisdiction (Sections 105, 106),
2. Appoint a local advisory board (Section 107),
3. Carry out sufficient measures to eradicate any List A and/or List B species subject to eradication in the jurisdiction (Section 108.5), and
4. Ensure that public Rights-of-Way are in compliance with the Act (Section 112).

All conservation districts receiving grant funding must be in good standing with CDA and with the [Department of Local Affairs \(DOLA\)](#).

Please contact CDA if you have questions about eligibility prior to submitting a grant application.

Schedule of Activities

Friday, October 31, 2025 - RFA Release Date

Friday, December 5, 2025 - Deadline to submit questions to CDA via email by 5:00 pm MST

Monday, December 9th, 2025 - Q&A Posted Online (no later than) 5:00 pm MST

Monday, December 15, 2025 - Application Submission Deadline at 5:00 pm MST

Friday, February 13, 2026 - Estimated Notification of Award

February 15 - May 31, 2026 - Statement of Work Development Period

April 1 - May 31, 2026 - Estimated Contract Issuance Period

How to Apply

Complete your [Google Form Application](#). Once you receive the confirmation email that your application has been submitted, forward that email to weeds@state.co.us with your Budget Table, Species Table and proposed treatment map(s) attached. When you forward the email, change the Subject of the email to: "2026 CDA Grant Application - ORGANIZATION NAME" (replace the word ORGANIZATION NAME with your organization's name).

Submit all documents by 5:00 pm on Monday, December 15, 2025. Submit all documents by 5:00 pm on Monday, December 15, 2025. Late applications will not be accepted. All applications must include the following:

- [Application \(Google Form\)](#)
- [Species Table](#) (Open link, then select File -> Download -> Microsoft Excel)
- [Budget Table](#) (Open link, then select File -> Download -> Microsoft Excel)
- Proposed treatment map(s)

Applications must follow all the requirements to be considered for funding as specified in this Request for Applications (RFA) document.

1. Fill out the Application and click "submit." You will receive a confirmation email.
2. Forward the email confirmation (change the Subject line to: "2026 CDA Grant Application - ORGANIZATION NAME") with all other documents attached to weeds@state.co.us before 5:00 pm on Monday, December 15, 2025.
3. If items are too large to fit in one email, you may upload them to a Google Drive folder and email the link. Alternatively, you may also package documents together in a Zip file.

Receipt of Application

Applicants will receive an email confirming the receipt of their application materials within 3 business days. If you do not receive confirmation within 3 business days, contact the CDA weeds email (weeds@state.co.us). All materials submitted will become public record and open to inspection after the award notice is issued.

Required Documentation

1. Google Form Application

Fill out the new [Google Form Application](#). You will not be able to save the form and return, so feel free to prepare your answers ahead of time by viewing them in the [2026 Grant Application Questions](#) document. You may download a copy of this document, edit it, and then copy/paste your answers into the Google Form Application once you are ready to submit. The application requires a signature at the very end of the form. It should be signed by the person who will oversee the grant, if awarded.

2. Species Table (Open link, then select File -> Download -> Microsoft Excel)

Download the [Species Table](#) to your computer. Change the word ORGANIZATION in the document's title to your organization's name.

The Species Table has two tabs:

- List A Species Tab: The first tab of the spreadsheet is dedicated to [List A species](#). Please use this tab to document any List A noxious weeds you plan to treat as part of your 2026 project.
- List B Species Tab: The second tab of the spreadsheet is dedicated to [List B species](#). Please use this tab to document any List B noxious weeds you plan to treat as part of your 2026 project.

If you have any questions while reviewing the instructions or filling out the Budget Table, please don't hesitate to reach out to us!

3. Budget Table (Open link, then select File -> Download -> Microsoft Excel)

Download the [Budget Table](#) to your computer. Change the word ORGANIZATION in the document's title to your organization's name. The sheet must contain all applicable spending requests and a minimum 1-to-1 match (cash contributions, personal services or in-kind services).

The Budget Table has two tabs:

- Instructions Tab: The first tab provides clear, detailed instructions on exactly how to fill out the Budget Table. Please review this tab thoroughly before you begin.
- Budget Table Tab: The second tab contains the actual budget form. This is the official document you need to complete with all the required financial and project information as outlined in the Instructions tab.

If you have any questions while reviewing the instructions or filling out the Budget Table, please email your questions to weeds@state.co.us with the subject line: "2026 Grant Question."

a. Reimbursable grant expenses are limited to:

- Wages for part-time, temporary or seasonal employees, including hiring and employment expenses, and excluding benefits such as health insurance or retirement contributions.
- Due to the difficulty hiring and retaining seasonal staff, this grant cycle will allow for reimbursement of wages for hours full-time employees spend completing on-the-ground project activities required to fulfill the grant.
- Contracted services.
- Restoration materials and services (such as seed, soil amendments and soil preparation).
- Non-vehicular-related equipment, materials and supplies, including Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) directly related to noxious weed management (such as gloves, Tyvek, trash bags, sunscreen, bug spray, hand tools, backpack sprayers).
- Herbicides.
- Field data collection equipment to support mapping, monitoring and surveying (such as phone, GPS, Wi-Fi, cameras, mapping software, data loggers, protective cases).
- Rental of equipment, including vehicles.
- Vehicular-mounted spray equipment, including directly related materials and supplies. Please use the [FEMA 2025 Equipment Schedule rates](#) for the closest related item to calculate equipment expenses.
 - All direct vehicle use expenses will be reimbursed on a mileage rate, hourly rate, or direct rental cost. These rates are used to cover all operating expenses, and no other vehicle-related expenses will be reimbursed.
- Outreach and marketing expenses, including event venue, materials for distribution, refreshments, and volunteer recognition.
- Training-related expenses (such as speaker fees, registration fees excluding CDA licensing fees).
- Cost-share expenses.

If your organization has unique circumstances that require expenses not on the list above, please contact CDA prior to submitting your application.

b. Administrative Expenses include:

Administrative expenses are the general operational costs necessary for managing a project, not the direct costs of carrying out the project's core activities. These costs can include both direct costs that are easily attributable to the grant and indirect costs that are shared across the entire organization.

The amount of the grant that can be used for administrative/overhead purposes is limited as follows:

- Grant amounts $\leq$ \$10,000, the maximum amount of administrative expenses is ten percent (10%) of the awarded grant amount.
- Grant amounts $\geq$ \$10,001, the maximum amount of administrative expenses is five percent (5%) of the awarded grant amount.

CDA may consider exceptions to these limits for new weed management programs, for first-time applicants or for applicants with other unique circumstances. It is not a requirement to utilize administrative costs in your grant application.

c. Matching Expenses:

Matching expenses are those expenditures incurred by the applicant and/or partners that are directly related to and necessary to implement the proposed grant activities or projects. Matching expenses pertain to all kinds of match, in-kind and cash.

■ Requirements for Matching Expenses

All grants require a 1-for-1 match. Reimbursement won't exceed the final match, and awards may be adjusted for reduced matching expenses. Matching funds can be cash and/or in-kind, with no cash match required. Eligible matching expenses include direct project expenses not claimed for reimbursement, in-kind staff support, salary, volunteer time, etc. Matching expenses can be incurred up to 90 days before the project's start date (per the Purchase Order Agreement).

■ Limitations for Matching Expenses

For Noxious Weed Fund projects, matching funds cannot come from other state funding sources unless approved by CDA prior to submitting a project proposal. Eligible funding sources include local, federal, or private funds (including cost-share). For SPF projects, matching fund sources cannot be federal.

4. Proposed Treatment Map(s)

All applications must include at least one map illustrating proposed treatment areas, clearly showing project location with a legend, north arrow, and title. If applying for U.S. Forest Service funding, the map needs to show vicinity to National Forest Services lands. Maps should be finished products, not just GIS data files. If one map is insufficient, provide separate maps by species or listing status.

Name your map: 2026_Map_ORGANIZATION (e.g., Map1, Map2 if multiple).

Contact the Noxious Weed Program

The CDA Noxious Weed Program employees are the sole points of contact concerning this RFA. During the solicitation process for this RFA, applicants may use the program email (weeds@state.co.us) to contact staff regarding the RFA or application process. Specific project questions cannot be answered during the solicitation process, unless it is referenced in the RFA that applicants need to discuss the matter with staff prior to applying.

Questions must be submitted via email to weeds@state.co.us with the subject line: “2026 Grant Question.”

All official communication with applicants will be posted at the Grant FAQs section on the CDA Grants & Financial Assistance website: [Grant Application Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#) This may include answers to inquiries received, clarifications to requirements, and changes to the application process. Information posted on the website supersedes any contradictory information that is given over the phone or email. It is incumbent upon applicants to monitor the Grant FAQ page carefully and regularly for changes.

Evaluation and Selection

CDA employs a Grants Evaluation Tool and Scoring Criteria to ensure fair selection of the best qualified proposals. The criteria for scoring are in direct correlation to the application components. Applications will be reviewed “as is” by an evaluation team consisting of members from the State Noxious Weed Advisory Committee, CDA, Colorado State University, federal and/or state agencies, and other qualified sources. Applications are competitive and thus ranked on merit compared with other applications as well as the criteria listed below.

The Commissioner of Agriculture makes the final decision regarding awards after receiving the recommendation from the evaluation team. Every effort is made to broadly distribute grant funds across Colorado provided a sufficient pool of applications is represented.

Ranking Criteria

Applications will be evaluated on the following criteria:

- **Project Vision:** Comprehensiveness of the project as presented in application documents.

- **Capacity to Fulfill Work:** Demonstrated ability of the applicant to execute the proposed work.
- **Alignment with Priorities:** Consistency of the project with state management plans.
- **Budget and Match Appropriateness:** Suitability of the requested budget and matching funds.
- **Application Completeness:** All parts of the application are fully filled out and submitted.

1. Partnerships

CDA gives preferences to grants with partnerships, especially those addressing challenging noxious weed problems in areas lacking effective infrastructure. We encourage long-term, sustainable collaborations among counties, municipalities, and conservation districts, including formal or informal CWMA's, WPA's, or other effective organizations. Partnerships with state and federal public land agencies are also encouraged, though spending state funds on federal lands require prior CDA approval, and federal funds cannot be spent on federal lands.

2. Integrated Weed Management

Management approaches including integrated weed management (IWM) and landscape- or watershed-scale projects are preferred. Projects that propose to use an array of tools and the most effective approaches are also preferred. Grant funds are competitive, so details provided in the Species Table should be sufficient to convince reviewers that this is a well-thought-out proposal that meets these priorities.

3. Species Mapping

An overall map of the proposed project area is required with each grant application. Applicants are also required to collect species-specific noxious weed location data within their proposed treatment areas as part of their overall project plan. Applications that demonstrate an ability to collect this data and a willingness to submit the data to the EDDMapS online mapping database are preferred.

4. Priority Species and Project Areas

One or more of the following specie priorities must be a main component of all grant applications:

- **List A:** CDA strongly encourages timely management actions to address threats posed by infestations of [List A species](#). Immediate containment of known populations, surveys and mapping of surrounding areas or susceptible lands, and initiation of multi-year eradication efforts should be included in proposals for List A species. Goals and objectives in a proposal

must be consistent with an overall plan and timeline for eradication.

- **List B:** Management plans for [List B species](#) must align with or exceed the plan outlined in the Colorado Noxious Weed Act Administrative Rules (8 CCR 1206-2). Priority will be given to applicants who include measurable goals to significantly reduce populations, shrink containment, treat outlying populations or vector corridors, and/or protect natural resources.

In addition, **List C** species may be added to an application with the following guidelines:

- Projects targeting [List C species](#) only will not be funded.
- Projects including List C species as a component must demonstrate that the species is a high priority locally, there is an effective and strategic treatment plan, and the project can potentially eliminate the species in an area or protect valuable natural resources.

Clearly describe the priority of managing selected species and target locations.

5. Partnerships

Priority is given to projects with dedicated and sustained partnerships, especially for challenging weed problems in underserved areas. Long-term collaborations among counties, municipalities, and conservation districts, including Cooperative Weed Management Areas (CWMAs) or Weed Prevention Areas (WPAs), are encouraged. Partnerships with state and federal agencies are also welcome, but utilizing state funds on federal lands require prior CDA approval, and federal funds cannot be used on federal lands.

6. Continued Effort (history & long-term plans)

Preference will be given to applications that demonstrate continuing efforts in the form of mid- and long-term partnerships that aim to work with landowners or other groups to implement successful past species management plans (e.g. 3 to 15 years). Applicants should clearly describe the desired outcomes of proposed management projects, and their commitment to future participation. This information should be detailed in the Partnerships section of the grant application.

7. Past Performance

For those who have had grants with us previously, past experience will be included as part of your application evaluation.

Supplemental Components

The following elements may be used to support priority species and project areas.

1. Prevention and Education

CDA prefers an education or outreach component in all projects. However, projects that focus solely or primarily on education and/or outreach will not be funded unless applicants discuss with CDA any special circumstances or unique opportunities prior to submitting a proposal.

2. Contributions to Watch List Information

Projects may include information gathering or mapping of [Watch List species](#), however, grant funds cannot be used to treat Watch List species, unless they are officially listed within the local Noxious Weed Management Plan. Surveying for populations, setting up ways to observe behavioral patterns, and submitting location data to the EDDMapS database are examples of Watch List species projects that could be considered. A project that focuses solely on Watch List species will not be funded.

Requirements for all Awarded Projects

Award notification

Notification letters will be sent to grant recipients via email as soon as selections are made. These notices are for informational and project planning purposes only, and do not establish an agreement between CDA and grant recipients. A Purchase Order Agreement will be sent to recipients following negotiation of a Statement of Work.

Statement of Work & Updated Budget

Once awarded funding, grantees will be assigned a Project Manager to administer the grant. Grantees should discuss all grant-related matters with the Project Manager.

Grantees will work with their CDA Project Manager to create a Statement of Work (SOW) that will be attached to the Purchase Order Agreement. This SOW will describe the terms of the goods and/or services provided to CDA in the form of project deliverables, which should closely follow those listed in the grant application.

Deliverables may be modified in the SOW if less than full funding was awarded. All deliverables must

be met in order to receive full reimbursement of the grant amount. Any requests for changes to an executed Purchase Order Agreement, which includes the corresponding Statement of Work, must be provided in writing or email, and approved in advance by CDA.

Fiscal Year Funding and Reimbursement Guidelines

The state fiscal year runs from July 1st through June 30th each year. During the development of the Statement of Work and Purchase Order agreement, the total award is divided between the two fiscal years that will occur during the course of the grant, to align with the state's budget cycle.

- **Interim Invoicing:** This split only matters if you plan to submit an interim invoice before June 30, of the current grant year.
- **Limit:** An interim invoice cannot exceed the initial fiscal year funding allocation. Funds for the fiscal year starting on July 1st are not available for invoicing on June 30th.
- **Carryover:** Any unspent funds in the initial fiscal year automatically carry over to the following fiscal year after July 1st.
- **Final Invoicing:** If you wait until the end of your grant to invoice, you can invoice for the full amount at one time, as long as your entire project is complete.

Reimbursement Schedule

CDA prefers a one-time reimbursement of all approved expenses at the end of the grant period. However, a request for partial reimbursement may be submitted if the end-of-grant reimbursement creates a hardship such as inability to pay due or past-due invoices or personnel wages owed. The interim reimbursement request must be sent to the CDA Grant Manager via email with an invoice and quarterly report, and the decision will also be sent via email for recordkeeping purposes.

Close out Documents

To close out a grant and receive reimbursement, the following documentation is required:

- Final Report Form
- Final Report Tables (includes the Budget Table)
- Proof of EDDMapS submission
- Photos of project activities (minimum of one per species; before/after photos preferred)
- Any outstanding deliverables

- Proof of cost-share participation and/or outreach activities (if applicable)
- Proof of expenses and match (including certified payroll records if applicable)
- Final Invoice
- Any other documentation requested by the CDA Project Manager

These close-out items are subject to change; the Statement of Work will detail those items that will be required to close out the grant in order to receive funding. Failure to meet all SOW requirements will affect final payment. A final report form will be provided to grant recipients. Certified Payroll is defined as a computer-generated, handwritten or photocopied payroll record with 2nd party signature certifying that the record is true and accurate.

Noxious Weed Occurrence Data

Prior to reimbursement, applicants must provide updated species distribution information to the EDDMapS online mapping database at eddmaps.org as part of the project deliverables. This information includes annual reports for all species targeted in the grant, as well as sightings or other information on Watch List species encountered during the field season. Data can be entered as new EDDMapS records, as “revisits” to existing records, or bulk uploaded from a local file.

Questions regarding data entry should be directed to [Emily McGrath](#) at CDA.

Pesticide Regulations

Grantees employing pesticide treatments must implement their projects in accordance with the Colorado Pesticide Applicator Act and the Colorado Pesticide Act.

Federal Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Requirements

The Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (commonly called "Uniform Guidance") was officially implemented in December 2014 by the Council on Financial Assistance Reform (COFAR). The Uniform Guidance, a "government-wide framework for grants management," synthesizes and supersedes guidance from earlier OMB circulars.

Title 2, Subtitle A, Chapter II, Part 200 of the Code of Federal Regulations describes in detail costs, procedures, and provisions for federally-funded projects. A link to this part of the Uniform Guidance has been provided below. State-funded projects must also comply with these federal procedures and

provisions. Contact CDA with any questions.

Link: [PART 200—UNIFORM ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS, COST PRINCIPLES, AND AUDIT REQUIREMENTS FOR FEDERAL AWARDS](#)

Purchase Order Agreement Time Constraints

All work on the project shall be concluded by the expiration date of the Purchase Order Agreement. “All work” includes the submission of the Final Report, Actual Expenses Budget Table, all project deliverables, and data collection. These items will be reviewed and approved by the CDA Grant Manager. Once approved, the invoice and supplemental documentation may be submitted. The Invoice and supplement information is due 45 days after the expiration of the Purchase Order Agreement.

Please select your project start and end dates accordingly, so there is ample time to meet all requirements.

Supplemental Information

This RFA also includes information provided in the [NWF Supplemental RFA](#) information. Applicants are advised to read this information and contact CDA with any questions or concerns.

Appeal Process

Right to Appeal

Applicants have the right to appeal an award decision within 10 calendar days of the date of the email from CDA containing the Notification Letter. **The appeal must be made in writing via email to CDA with the phrase “Appeal to Grant Award” in the subject line.** All appeals must provide written justification for why the applicant believes the award decision should be reconsidered. Additional or supplemental information will not be accepted, and applications cannot be amended after the application deadline.

CDA Response to Appeal

Appeals received within the 10-day calendar period will be reviewed by an evaluation team consisting of members from the State Noxious Weed Advisory Committee, Colorado State University, CDA, federal and/or state agencies, and possibly other sources. All appeals will be considered on the

described justification provided by the applicant. A final written decision will be provided via email by CDA to the applicant within 30 days of the email requesting the appeal.

Cautionary Note

Appeals will result in a delayed starting date of up to 40 calendar days. Grant-related work should not be undertaken prior to appeal resolution, even if partial funding was originally awarded. In addition, since CDA makes every effort to award the top scoring applicants across the state, there is no guarantee that supplemental grant funds will be available at the time an appeal is resolved.

End of Request for Applications