



CALIFORNIA
FireSafe
COUNCIL

Wildfire Evacuation Route Grant Applicant Handbook

2021

California Fire Safe Council
2021 Wildfire Evacuation Route
Planning and Development Grant
Applicant Handbook

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION 1 **REFERENCE MATERIALS**

SECTION 1.1	GRANT ANNOUNCEMENT	1-2
SECTION 1.2	FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS	3-7
SECTION 1.3	APPLICATION INFORMATION	8

SECTION 2 **APPLICATION QUESTIONS**

SECTION 2.1	APPLICATION QUESTIONS	9-12
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SECTION 3 **REQUIRED DOCUMENTS**

SECTION 3.1	REQUIRED DOCUMENT CHECKLIST	13
SECTION 3.2	NON-APPLICABLE DOCUMENT TEMPLATE	14

SECTION 4 **APPLICATION SCORING**

SECTION 4.1	SCORING CRITERIA	15-16
SECTION 4.2	DATA CITATIONS	17-18

SECTION 1
REFERENCE MATERIALS



California Fire Safe Council Wildfire Evacuation Route Planning and Development Grant Opportunity

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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More information on our
website:

[https://cafiresafecouncil.org/
2021-county-evacuation-
route-grant-opportunity/](https://cafiresafecouncil.org/2021-county-evacuation-route-grant-opportunity/)

Acknowledgements

This grant program and publication are funded in full by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) as part of the California Climate Investment Program.

November 10, 2021

The California Fire Safe Council (CFSC) is pleased to announce the 2021 Cal Fire “Wildfire Evacuation Route Planning and Development” Grant Program.

The objective of the Wildfire Evacuation Route Planning and Development Grant is to assist counties containing State Responsibility Area (SRA) lands with planning and creating evacuation routes that can be used in the event of encroaching wildfires.

Funding Available: A total of \$1.9 million dollars is available to counties for this work, with a maximum grant amount of \$380,000.

Eligible counties will receive up to \$380,000 to cover costs related to evacuation route planning, construction, and administrative costs including hazardous fuel reduction and signage along evacuation routes

Eligibility:

The grant opportunity will give priority to counties with a high percentage of Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones and a higher proportion of disadvantaged and/or low-income communities. Only one application per county will be accepted.

Goals

Counties will use the grant funds to plan and implement improvements to their system of wildfire evacuation routes. This should include an assessment of their current network of evacuation routes and identifying what the most cost-effective use of the grant funds would be to achieve the maximum public benefit.

Counties will also use the grant funds to improve public outreach and education about the county’s wildfire evacuation route network and how it is intended to be used by the public.

Counties will also use the grant funds to provide a comprehensive final report summarizing the County’s Wildfire Evacuation Route Network and Utilization Plan, including key issues, success outcomes and gaps, and recommendations.

Deliverables/Expectations

- (I) Participate in monthly check-in meetings with CFSC staff.
- (II) Track and monitor project tasks, meetings, workshops, and plans developed.
- (III) Submit quarterly programmatic and fiscal reports.
- (IV) Provide a GIS layer of all routes identified, planned, built, maintained, or signed during the project



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Suggested Uses of Grant Funds:

- Hire/designate staff to implement project
- Office space for staff
- Cost of public outreach efforts
- Technology/infrastructure needed to implement, communicate, measure, and/or track project progress, including software and technical assistance

Accepting Applications: starting November 15, 2021

To Apply:

Visit <https://cafiresafecouncil.org/grants-and-funding/apply-for-a-grant/> to create a new ZoomGrants account or login to your existing account and select “2021 CAL FIRE “Wildfire Evacuation Route Planning and Development” grant program to begin.

Please note: Applications will not be available for viewing until November 15, 2021.

Grant Opportunity Webinar: Nov. 18, 2021, 10:00 am PST

Topic: 2021 Cal Fire Wildfire Evacuation Route Planning and Development Application
Learn how to apply for this grant.

Register at: https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_EgClq6l9SD2--r0-aNzNgA

Application submittal deadline is **December 22, 2021** at 11:59PM PST.
Grant awards will be **announced February 2022**.



The “Wildfire Evacuation Route Planning and Development” grant is part of California Climate Investments, a statewide program that puts billions of Cap-and-Trade dollars to work reducing GHG emissions, strengthening the economy, and improving public health and the environment – particularly in disadvantaged communities. For more information, visit the California Climate Investments website at: www.caclimateinvestments.ca.gov.

1.2 Frequently Asked Questions

ELIGIBILITY

Q: Can a county apply for this grant and in turn sub-grant the funds to the FSC's or cities or use for regional evacuation planning?

A: The Applicant must be a county. If the county decides to contract the work to another agency that is within their discretion.

Q: Can you apply if you have been awarded a CFSC grant in the past?

A: The grants are designated for counties. So yes, if a county government has received a grant from the CFSC in the past, it is eligible to apply for a Wildfire Evacuation Route Planning and Development grant.

Q: As a Regional Transportation Planning Agency, we work closely with the County and local transit agency in coordinating evacuation efforts. Does the County need to be the applicant, or would we be eligible to apply?

A: Yes, the Applicant must be a county government.

Q: If multiple entities applied within a county seeking the same end result, could they form a partnership and pursue a common project with shared interest in a common outcome? And, would the partnership need to be established (e.g. MOU) prior to application or could it be finalized after grant award?

A: Yes, that sounds like a great idea. The partnership should be established prior to submitting the application; the county government would need to be the lead applicant and submit the application.

Q: If the County engages a contractor, can the contractor complete and submit the application on behalf the County?

A: The applicant must be the County.

Q: Can a county designate a fire safe council as the submitter?

A: The County must be the applicant and receive the award.

Q: In the early October webinars, it was mentioned the county could provide a letter of authorization for another agency to act as submitter/project lead. Has that changed, or if not, how does that fit into the application process?

A: Yes, that was further clarified for us. The Legislation states the grants must be made to Counties only.

Q: Clarification - RCDs/FSCs cannot apply on behalf of the County to implement the work. (i.e., like the Fire Safe Coordinator Opportunity?) Only the County can apply here?

A: Correct, the County must be the applicant.

Q: Will there be a regional priority after applications have been submitted such as what happened with the county coordinators grant? In other words, will all counties be considered this round? or just a particular Cal Fire region?

A: All counties will be considered at this time. If this changes, we will send out an update.

PROJECT PLANNING AND USE OF FUNDS

Q: Could this grant be used to pay for a service such as Zonehaven?

A: Yes, software that is necessary for evacuation route planning and the product is public facing and will benefit the local agency and the public.

Q: Does the workplan need to cover the whole county or can it cover a high-risk area within the county?

A: The goal is to cover the whole county, but applications covering highest priority areas will also be accepted.

Q: If a planning project application spans the SRA and LRA, would it still be eligible?

A: Yes.

Q: If matching funds are available is it beneficial to list them?

A: Yes, please list or describe any matching funds and their source in the application. Again, they are not required.

Q: Can you share examples of successful projects?

A: Since this is a new program, we don't have any past examples. Planning, fuels, signage, and public education are all eligible activities.

Q: Is there a requirement that there be an analysis of the project impact prior to submission? If so, what criteria would you use to evaluate impact?

A: There is no requirement for an analysis of the project impact.

Q: Because this grant goes to counties does it kick in prevailing wages as a requirement?

A: CAL FIRE provides no opinion as to whether projects may be subject to prevailing wages. For determination for prevailing wages, please contact the Department of Industrial Relations (DIR) at [DIR Prevailing Wage](#). It is the applicant's responsibility to budget for prevailing wages in their project cost when applicable.

Q: Are there any guidelines or requirements for how a County applicant prioritizes spending the grant award within its sub-contractors? In other words, if there are multiple Cities or organizations in the county that would like to be a sub-contractor for part of the award funds, are there any requirements or guidelines in the grant that the county needs to adhere to? Or is it totally up to the County how it disburses for projects?

A: It is up to the County to decide on how to disburse the funds.

Q: Does the county need to designate the sub-contractor(s) in the application?

A: It is not required.

APPLICATION INFORMATION AND KEY DATES

Q: When is the application due?

A: Our application schedule is as follows:

- November 15, 2021 – Application period opens
- **December 22, 2021 – Applications due at 11:59pm**
- February 14, 2022 – Announce awards (anticipated)
- March 1, 2022 – Project start date (anticipated)

Q: What is the performance period of the grant?

A: We anticipate the performance period will begin in March 2022 and go through March 2023. Specific dates are still being worked out and are subject to change.

Q: Where on your website are the application materials are located?

A: If you have not applied with us yet, you can create a new grant account at: <https://cafiresafecouncil.org/2021-county-evacuation-route-grant-opportunity/>

Q: Will the slides be emailed right after this webinar?

A: The slides and a video of the webinar will be on our website: <https://cafiresafecouncil.org/2021-county-evacuation-route-grant-opportunity/>

Q: Will there be a Grant Application Handbook developed, similar to what was produced for the County Coordinators grant application?

A: Yes. All the available resources will be posted on our website at: <https://cafiresafecouncil.org/2021-county-evacuation-route-grant-opportunity/>

REIMBURSEMENT PROCESS AND REPORTING

Q: How long do you estimate it would take from the time a reimbursement request is submitted until payment is issued. This will be important when hiring sub-contractors to perform some of this work.

A: Since this is a new process, we don't have an exact time frame, but we will have more clear information when/if we issue you a subaward.

Q: Are there financial advances?

A: Grant payments to counties are on a reimbursement basis only.

Q: So, the county has to submit quarterly reports or the contractor?

A: The award goes the county and is responsible for all reporting and deliverables.

For more information, please contact:

Dan Lang
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Dave Farley
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1.3 Application Information

Contact:

For any questions about this grant program or application, please contact Senior Grant Specialists Dan Lang at dlang@cafiresafecouncil.org, (916-256-3621), or Dave Farley dfarley@cafiresafecouncil.org, (213-595-0935).

Important Websites:

For detailed information about the grant, visit:

<https://cafiresafecouncil.org/2021-county-evacuation-route-grant-opportunity/>

The application can be found at <https://cafiresafecouncil.org/grants-and-funding/apply-for-a-grant/> in the ZoomGrants box under “open programs”. Click on the application, login, or create a new account to begin.

Timeline:

November 15, 2021	Applications Open
November 18, 2021- 10AM PST	Technical Webinar: (Webinar will be recorded and posted on the 2021 County Evacuation Route Grant opportunity webpage)
December 22, 2021- 11:59PM PST	Applications Close
February 14, 2022	Awards Announced

SECTION 2
APPLICATION QUESTIONS

Section 2.1 Application Questions

County Information

1. Which county government do you represent?

Please note: only counties can apply.

2. List the individuals who will be part of your grant project team.

Identify the project manager; the director in charge of evacuation route planning; the contacts for programmatic and financial reporting.

3. Which department(s) within your county government is responsible to plan, designate, build, maintain, and operate wildfire evacuation routes?

4. Please describe your county (e.g., population, demographics, fire history, etc.)

5. Latitude and Longitude

Enter the latitude and longitude of your county's administration building. Your response must be in decimal format to six places, for example: 39.375097 Latitude and -122.54454 Longitude.

Latitude

Longitude

6. Address of County's Administration Building

Example: 123 Main St, Sacramento, CA 95814

Current Evacuation Route Planning and Implementation Status

7. Please describe your county's current efforts with evacuation route planning, construction, and maintenance, including recent (notable) evacuation route projects and/or accomplishments.

8. Does your county have an evacuation plan in place?

- Yes
- No
- In progress
- Unknown
- Not applicable

9. If yes, enter the date the evacuation plan was last updated, or anticipated to be approved, and a link if it's available to view online.

Enter N/A if your county does not currently have an evacuation plan.

10. How many miles of evacuation routes are in your county? (estimated)

miles evacuation routes completed

miles evacuation routes incomplete or under construction

miles evacuation routes not started/in planning phase

TOTAL

11. Does your county use any standards and practices to guide the identification, design, and construction of evacuation routes?

- Yes
- No
- Unknown

12. If yes, describe where we can obtain a copy of the standards.

Please provide a link if the standards are available online or attach a copy to this application in the Documents tab. Enter N/A if standards are not available or not applicable.

13. Has this planning been done in coordination with any of the following, and if so which ones?

- County Office of Emergency Services
- County Sheriff
- Cal Fire or county fire authority
- Other:

Evacuation Needs

14. Looking ahead, how much funding would your county need to complete your evacuation goals and plans? Enter dollar amounts in whole numbers. Do not include the dollar symbol (\$).

Planning

Fuels treatment/Road clearance

Road construction

Signage

Public outreach/Education

TOTAL

15. Describe the projects, in order of priority, that could be completed with the funding amount listed above in question 14.

16. What additional resources, beyond funding if applicable, would you need to complete the projects listed above? Enter N/A if not applicable

17. What is the total amount (in dollars) of deferred maintenance for your evacuation routes?
Enter dollar amount in whole numbers. Do not include the dollar symbol (\$). Leave field blank if you don't know the amount.

Total amount of evacuation route deferred maintenance

TOTAL

GIS Capacity

18. Are your evacuation routes GIS mapped?

- Yes
- No

19. If yes, provide a link to any available information online.
Enter N/A if no link is available.

20. Does your county currently have access to GIS software?

- Yes
- No

21. If yes, what software do you currently use?
Select N/A if your county does not have access to GIS software.

- ESRI
- QGIS
- N/A
- Other:

22. If other, does it provide the ability to export .shp files?

- Yes
- No
- N/A

23. Does your county have professional GIS staff available to assist with this project?

- Yes, full-time staff
- Yes, part-time staff
- Yes, contracted staff
- No

Project Information

24. Executive summary

Provide a brief summary (2-3 sentences) of your proposed project.

25. Which category of funding are you seeking?

Select all that apply

- Planning
- Fuels treatment/Road clearance
- Road construction
- Signage
- Public Outreach and Education

26. Describe your project.

27. Will this project hire new employees or contractors? Please describe.

28. Describe the plan(s), documents, materials, signs, fuels treatments, etc. that will be created through this project. Who will implement the work plan?

29. Do you anticipate any permits or approvals will be required to complete your project? If so, please describe.

Project Outcomes and Evaluation

30. Please describe the anticipated outcomes of the Wildfire Evacuation Route Planning and Development Grant?

31. How will you measure the success of the Wildfire Evacuation Route Planning and Development Grant?

32. How will your county work to sustain your project after the close of the grant term?

SECTION 3
REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

3.1 Required Document Checklist

Required documents for county applicants		Uploaded into ZoomGrants
1	<input type="checkbox"/> Governmental Information Letter. Check with your finance/business office or click here for instructions on how to request the letter: Governmental Information Letter Internal Revenue Service (irs.gov)	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	<input type="checkbox"/> Board of Supervisors roster	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	<input type="checkbox"/> Certificate of insurance	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	<input type="checkbox"/> Copies of the last 5 years' audit reports and management letters received from county's independent auditor	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	<input type="checkbox"/> A signed "Non-Applicable Documents Memo" on your county's letterhead certifying that you cannot submit additional required documents (see template section 3.2).	<input type="checkbox"/>

This checklist is not required to be completed or submitted and is for individual use & tracking

3.2 Non-Applicable Document Template

MUST BE ON COUNTY LETTERHEAD

Date

California Fire Safe Council
5834 Price Avenue #101
McClellan, CA 95652

Re-Non-Applicable Documents
Wildfire Evacuation Route Planning and Development Grant

Listed below are the pre-award documents that do not apply to this project or the County of _____ for the reasons stated in the table:

Non-Applicable Document	Reason
Organization by-laws	The County of _____ is a public agency
Last two years' IRS form 990 or 990EZ	County governments are not required to file these forms
Other Documents	
Governmental Information Letter	Note: The Governmental Information Letter is a <u>required</u> document. If you are unable to submit the letter with your application, you will be required to provide one prior to receiving funding if your organization is awarded a grant.

Sincerely

Signed by county official/applicant

SECTION 4
APPLICATION SCORING

4.1 Scoring Criteria

These criteria are specific to CFSC’s “Wildfire Evacuation Route Planning and Development Grant” applications. Applications will be scored by a review committee 1) using data to evaluate how well the applicant county fits into the priority areas (listed below) and 2) using a set of criteria to evaluate application quality and how well the proposed project fits the purpose and objectives of the “Wildfire Evacuation Route Planning and Development Grant” program. If the applicant does not have high scores based on these priority areas, it does not exclude them from being selected as a grant recipient due to the combined nature of the scores.

The review committee will provide a sum of scores that will include scores from the data set scoring, plus scores based on application quality criteria. Scores will be given on a scale of 0-5, with 5 being the maximum score and 0 being the minimum score.

**See Data Citations (pg. 17) for more information about data sets used in the scoring process.*

DATA SET SCORING

- 1) The county’s percentage of acreage contained within a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone.
- 2) The percentage of the county covered by low-income census tracts or low-income *and* disadvantaged census tracts.
- 3) The number of acres burned within the county from 2010-2020.

APPLICATION QUALITY SCORING

Criteria #1
Rate the county’s history of notable accomplishments/projects, successes, and prior grant experience.
<i>Refer to Current Evacuation Route Planning and Implementation Status question #7</i>

Criteria #2
Rate how well the applicant’s response expresses a need for developing or enhancing a wildfire evacuation route or routes, and how the applicant county will address that need.
<i>Refer to Evacuation Needs questions #14-16; Project Information questions #24 & 26; Budget tab, Workplan tab</i>

Criteria #3

The project budget and narrative are clear and reasonable. The proposed budget shows how grant funds will be spent by category and costs are reasonable for the size, scope, and benefit of the project.

Refer to Budget tab

Criteria #4

Rate how well the applicant will use the grant funds to address wildfire evacuation route development priorities within their county.

Refer to Evacuation Needs, #15; Project Information, #26; Workplan tab; Budget tab

Criteria #5

Rate the clarity and achievability of the applicant's anticipated outcomes and measurements of success. Consider how well the applicant ties these outcomes back to their overall project plan.

Refer to Project Outcomes and Evaluation, #30 & 31

Criteria #6

Rate the feasibility of the applicant's plan to staff and manage the project. Consider whether the project manager will have adequate support to be successful in accomplishing the project objectives.

Refer to County Information, #2 & 3; Project Information, #26-28

Criteria #7

Rate how well the applicant's anticipated outcomes will achieve the desired improvements in the county's wildfire evacuation route system.

Refer to Project Outcomes and Evaluation, #30 & 31

Criteria #8

Rate how well the applicant demonstrates a specific approach for long-term maintenance and support of the benefits achieved from the project beyond of the end of the grant term.

Refer to Project Outcomes and Evaluation, #32

4.2 Data Citations

The following data sets will inform the Evacuation Route Grant Review Committee and help them to make scoring decisions based on the grant's priority areas. Scores from these data sets will be combined with the scores from the criteria shown on the *Application Scoring Criteria* document to determine a final score for each applicant.

The priority areas are as follows:

- 1) The percentage of the county covered by low-income census tracts or low-income *and* disadvantaged census tracts.
- 2) The county's percentage of acreage contained within a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone.
- 3) The number of acres burned within the county from 2010-2020.

Low Income and Disadvantaged Communities



Senate Bill (SB) 535 (De León, Chapter 830, Statutes of 2012) and Assembly Bill (AB) 1550 (Gomez, Chapter 369, Statutes of 2016) direct State and local agencies to make investments that benefit California's priority populations: disadvantaged communities, low-income communities, and/or low-income households. These "priority populations" include residents of: (1) census tracts identified as disadvantaged by the CalEPA per SB 535; (2) census tracts identified as low-income per AB 1550; or (3) a low-income household per AB 1550.

This dataset represents census tracts identified as priority populations and is delineated into four categories: SB 535 Disadvantaged Communities, AB 1550 Low-income Communities, communities that are both SB 535 Disadvantaged and AB 1550 Low-income, and AB 1550 Low-income Communities that are within 1/2 mile of a SB 535 Disadvantaged Community.

Low Income utilized the AB 1550 Low-income Communities data from the dataset.

Low Income and Disadvantaged utilized the communities that are both SB 535 Disadvantaged and AB 1550 Low-income from the dataset.

<https://databasin.org/datasets/e507bb2b6bc342a2a3b66b83fadb7159/>

Fire Hazard Severity Zones



A Fire Hazard Severity Zone (FHSZ) is a mapped area that designates zones (based on factors such as fuel, slope, and fire weather) with varying degrees of fire hazard (i.e., moderate, high, and very high). FHSZ maps evaluate wildfire hazards, which are physical conditions that create a likelihood that an area will burn over a 30- to 50-year period. They do not take into account modifications such as fuel reduction efforts.

While FHSZs do not predict when or where a wildfire will occur, they do identify areas where wildfire hazards could be more severe and therefore are of greater concern. FHSZs are meant to help limit wildfire damage to structures through planning, prevention, and mitigation activities/requirements that reduce risk. The FHSZs serve several purposes: they are used to designate areas where California's wildland urban interface building codes apply to new buildings; they can be a factor in real estate disclosure; and local governments consider fire hazard severity in the safety elements of their general plans.

This service includes proposed Fire Hazard Severity Zones for State Responsibility Area lands and separate draft Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones for Local Responsibility Area lands. Moderate, high, and very high FHSZs are found in areas where the State has financial responsibility for fire protection and prevention (SRA). Only very high FHSZs are found in Local Responsibility Areas (LRAs).

<https://databasin.org/datasets/fbb8a20def844e168aeb7beb1a7e74bc/>

California Fire Perimeters



CAL FIRE Perimeters and Prescribed Burns (1950+). Includes separate groups for just large fires (5000+ acres) vs all fires, and a separate layer for Prescribed Burns.

All fires represented within the dataset were used between 2010 and 2020.

<https://databasin.org/datasets/bf8db57ee6e0420c8ecce3c6395aceeb/>