

High Rolls Vol. Fire Dept.

April 9, 2001

To: Federal Emergency Management Agency
USFA Grant Program Technical Assistance Center
16825 South Seton Avenue
Emmitsburg, MD 21727-8898

Enclosed please find 3 copies of a proposal for the FIRE Act grant program. We welcome the opportunity to submitted this proposal in an effort to advance our fire protection services to the citizens of New Mexico. If approved, this proposal will move up our time schedule for improved fire services in this area by at least 6 years and likely save homes , timber, wildlife , and possibly lives.

If we can be of any assistance during the evaluation period by providing clarification or additional information please feel free to contact me at the above address or below information

Thank you for this opportunity and all of the work your organization as put in to support the fire services.

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Chief, HRVFD

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FIRE ACT GRANT PROPSAL

HIGH ROLLS VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

OTERO COUNTY, NEW MEXICO

PINEY WOODS SUBDIVISION

WILDLAND/URBAN INTERFACE FIRE REDUCTION

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General Questions for All Applicants

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1. Are you a Fire Department or the authorized representative of a fire department? (circle one)

a) **Yes.**

b) No.

2. Are you a Federal Fire Department or contracted by the Federal government and solely responsible for suppression of fires on Federal property?

a) Yes.

b) **No.**

3. Is your active firefighting staff (circle one):

a) all paid/career?

b) **all volunteer** or combination volunteer and career?

4. Is your department located in (circle one):

a) an urban community (population over 250,000)?

b) a suburban community (population between 20,000 and 250,000)?

c) **a rural community** (population under 20,000)?

5. How many active firefighters are in the operations/- EMS divisions of you department?

21 = Number of active firefighters.

6. What is the permanent resident population of your primary/first-response area or jurisdiction served?

1450= Population of response area.

7. What category (or categories) of assistance are you applying for with this application and how much is the total Federal share of the cost of the project that you are seeking in each category?

Category #1: **\$ 80,000**

Category #2: Not applicable

8. If the population you protect is 50,000 or less, you are required to provide a non-Federal cost-share equal to 10 percent of the total project cost. If the population you protect is over 50,000, you are required to provide a non-Federal cost-share equal 30 percent of the total project cost.

Are you willing to comply with this requirement? (circle one)

a) **Yes.**

b) No.

9. It is also a requirement that departments receiving funding under this grant program agree to provide information to the national fire incident reporting (NFIRS). If you receive an award, do you agree to provide information to this national system? (circle one)

a) **Yes.**

b) No.

Questions for Vehicle Category

page 1 of 2

1. What type of vehicle will you use the grant funds to purchase (circle one):

- a) **Engine** (includes Pumpers) b) Tanker
- c) Heavy Rescue Vehicle d) Brush Truck
- e) Ambulance f) Aerial Apparatus (includes Ladders)
- g) Other, specify =

2. The purpose for this grant is to (circle one):

- a) Obtain an additional vehicle for firefighting fleet.
- b) **Replace/retire an old firefighting vehicle.**
- c) Refurbish an old firefighting vehicle.
- d) Purchase a new vehicle to fulfill a new mission.

3. How many vehicles of the type or class you are planning to purchase does your department own?

2 = Number of vehicle

4. What is the age of your newest first-response vehicle in this class that you currently own?

1995 = Age of newest vehicle.

5. What is the age of the oldest first-response vehicle in this class that you currently own?

1962 = Age of oldest vehicle.

6. What is the mileage on the first-response vehicle you are replacing/refurbishing?

54,727 = Mileage of vehicle.

7. What is the average number of annual responses for the first-response vehicle you are replacing/refurbishing?

12 = Average annual responses.

Abstract

In 1996 the USDA/USFS prepared a report identifying problem Wildland/Urban Interface areas in and around the High Rolls Fire District. Since then there have been actions by both the High Rolls Volunteer Fire Department (HRVFD) and the USFS to address these concerns. Currently the largest gap in rectifying these concerns is the lack of an appropriate fire apparatus to provide quick and effective response on both structures and wildfires in the Piney Woods area. After years of effort to build and staff a substation in the area we are now requesting funding to provide assistance in placing a Type 3 engine in this station.

Narrative

Problem Statement

In the mountains of southern New Mexico homeowners are increasingly building homes in areas previously inhabited only by tall pine trees. While these areas are on privately owned land they are often surrounded by national forests. As the homeowners and the pine trees converge, the possibility of a wildfire started in one affecting the other increases dramatically. This is what is commonly referred to as the Wildland/Urban Interface.

One such area within the High Rolls Fire District of Otero County New Mexico is the Piney Woods Subdivision. This subdivision with nearly 300 potential homesites , of which 90 are currently occupied with permanent structures, has been identified as one of the worst Wildland/Urban Interfaces. Reference 1 states that in addition to the potential catastrophic losses within this subdivision, that a fire started in this area could threaten the entire Village of Cloudcroft. Along the way 500 acres of mix conifer timber could be destroyed.

In this area between the Piney Woods subdivision and Cloudcroft is the Mexican Canyon Trestle which is listed in the National Register of Historic Places and the highly utilized Bailey Canyon recreational site.¹ The surrounding forest is home to seven (7) threatened, endangered, and sensitive species including the Mexican spotted owl, Sacramento prickly poppy, and the checkered spotted butterfly.¹ All of which would be further threatened by a wildfire in the area.

Finally below this area in the Fresnal Canyon drainage are the communities of High Rolls, Mountain Park, and La Luz which could be threatened by catastrophic flooding raging through Fresnal Canyon down the 4500 foot drop in elevation if a fire were to destroy the vegetation above.

High Rolls Vol. Fire Dept.

In the past six (6) years we have had four (4) fires in the area, three (3) wildfires and one (1) structure fire. Due in part to the weather conditions at the time and ease of access, these fires were held to minimal damage. Unfortunately we do not believe we will continue to be so lucky.

Overall Objective

The need to reduce the possibility of a catastrophic wildfire in the area surrounding and to the east of the Piney Woods Subdivision is great. Since the initial publication of reference 1 there has been a concerted effort to work towards this objective.

Over the years The High Rolls Volunteer Fire Department (HRVFD) and United States Forest Service personnel have met with the residents on a number of occasions, provided educational material, added road fire danger signage and did combined training and preplanning in the area. The High Rolls Volunteer Fire Department has added a two (2) bay fire substation on land donated by the subdivision and recruited and trained five (5) local homeowners. Currently this substation is equipped with 2 surplus apparatus, one 32 and the other 39 years old. Both vehicles have leaking water tanks, under-powered gasoline motors and inadequate gear ratios for the mountains. Additionally the oldest truck has one of the pump stages bypassed and both vehicles required significant maintenance work this past year, primarily with the brakes. Due to the difficulty in getting parts and lack of funding the brakes were made serviceable when they really needed a complete overhaul. Consequently we are requesting funds to help purchase a quick attack wildland/urban interface vehicle to replace the worse of these two vehicles.

Goal of this grant proposal

Our goal will be to place a crew of 3 with at least 350 gal of water with a high flow/pressure pump and foam into the area within 5 minutes of the call within the subdivision and 8 minutes outside the subdivision but within the response area. These times are critical during our fire seasons when winds in excess of 25 mph are daily occurrences and will quickly spread a fire to the crowns and over a large area.

Implementation

Due to limited funding the HRVFD can only invest approximately \$25,000 on this area over the next three (3) years. We currently have outstanding debt of \$ 80,000 from the purchase of a 1999 apparatus and a need to replace a 20 year old 2wd ambulance with a blown transmission with a 4wd unit and a 25 year old class A pumper with a leaking pump and a very weak motor in another substation.

Schedule

Grant request submitted:	4-20-01
Notification of Funds available:	T=0
Bid documents submitted:	T+30 days
Bid accepted:	T+45 days
Contract award	T+ 60 days
Expected delivery *	T+240 days
Apparatus in service:	T+243 days

* in an effort to get faster delivery we will attempt to take advantage of any demonstration units that meet our needs and would be available for immediate delivery.

Feasibility

While the sum of funding required is quite high we believe that if funded the project returns are substantial. With appropriate apparatus located in this area providing the needed response time, water, and equipment on scene, small fires can be intercepted earlier and efficiently such that the possibility of spread even during our dry windy season can be significantly reduced. By catching fires earlier we will save lives, and substantial property. Additionally this first in apparatus can order up mutual aid departments if needed, cutting their response time by as much as 15 minutes.

Accountability

High Rolls Vol. Fire Dept.

All purchasing will be handled through Otero County purchasing office. They shall ensure the purchasing is done fairly and in accordance with applicable state and county laws as well as any grant restrictions.

Supplementary Information

High Rolls VFD currently consist of four (4) stations, nine (9) pieces of apparatus, and 22 active volunteer personnel. HRVFD serves; the rural communities of High Rolls, Mountain Park, and the area between these and the Village of Cloudcroft, the entire county via mutual aid agreements, as well as the entire state and federal lands via an interagency agreement. The district covers approximately 36 square miles with rolling hills and mountains. Vegetation varies from grass to Pinion and Juniper to mixed conifer. The dryness of the area (less than 15 inches of rain each year) combined with the steep slopes and high New Mexico winds make this area a hazard for firefighters and structures in the path of a wildfire.

Summertime population of the Piney Woods Subdivision can easily reach 300 persons. While no figures exist for these rural communities, Otero County has grown in population by 20% in the last 10 years³. Based on the increase of assigned boxes at the local US Post Office it is evident that the HRVFD district has grown at approximately the same rate. Even with this wetter than average winter, the fire danger is already high and live fuel moistures are only in the 70% range⁴ The homes currently in the subdivision alone have a combined value exceeding \$12,000,000.

HRVFD responds to approximately 70 calls per year of which 10-12 will be of a wildland fire type. Currently we have a 1995 wildland apparatus located at our main station as the primary response vehicle for wildland fires. This unit has a 17 year old slip on unit with 200 gallons of water a 100 gpm pump and add on foam system.

Cloudcroft has a permanent population of 750 with an average daily inhabitation of over 2000 persons¹. It contains; village, state and federal offices, schools, ski resort, hotels and other businesses. A local volunteer fire department and HRVFD as well as other county volunteer fire

departments via mutual aid agreement provide fire protection. Cloudcroft is currently listed as a hazardous community for the Wildland/Urban Interface environment.²

Last year, wildfires in New Mexico destroyed nearly 200 homes and burned over 519,177 acres, 26 of those homes and 16,000 acres were here in Otero County. The loss of this timber in Otero County alone was in part responsible for closure and subsequent loss of approximately 100 jobs at one of the local sawmills.

The forest in the area has nearly tripled in number of trees per area in the last century and the round head beetles and dwarf mistletoe has infected a substantial number of trees.

Additionally , 50% of the Southwestern White Pine in the area are infested with white pine blister rot. ¹ All of this makes the forest conditions right for a large wildfire.

References

1. Cloudcroft Urban/Wildland Interface Assessment, Lincoln National Forest, Sacramento Ranger District, June 21,1996
2. Federal Register 1-4-2001 Vol. 66 Number 3 Pages 751-771
3. Alamogordo Daily News Vol. 103 NO. 70 Friday march 23, 2001
4. USDA Wildfire Assessment System: <http://www.fs.fed.us/land/wfas/>

Budget

Item	Funding Agency	HRVFD	Total sources in-kind
<u>Equipment</u>			
1 Type 3 Fire Apparatus			
4x4 450 gal 125 gpm	\$70,000	\$10,000	\$80,000
Hose ¹		\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000
Nozzles ¹		\$ 1,000	\$1,000
Hardware ¹		\$ 1,750	\$ 1,750
Mobile Radio ¹		\$1,250	\$ 1,250
Totals	\$70,000	\$19,000	\$ 89,000

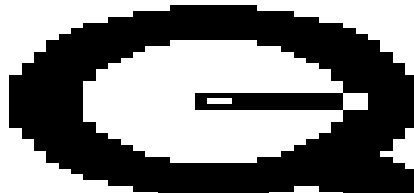
¹ Equipment to be either provided from other apparatus or purchased new. Cost estimates based on replacement value of equipment.

HRVFD will provide a station with heat and water for parking and securing the vehicle. These cost are budgeted at \$1,000 per year.

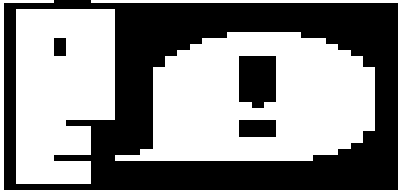
HRVFD will provide all maintenance and operating costs. These cost will be covered under the annual budget via NM state fire funds. The insurance and operating costs will be budgeted at \$1,000 per year the first 3 years then \$2,000 per year after until the useable life is exceeded.

Otero County shall provide clerical assistance for purchasing and maintaining the apparatus.

This is estimated at 24 Mhrs for the purchasing with maintenance support being minimal.



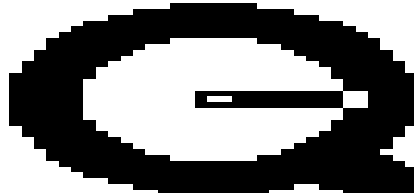
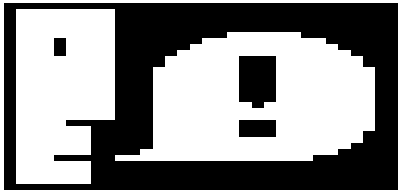
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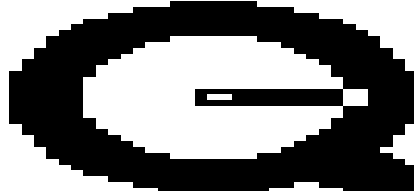
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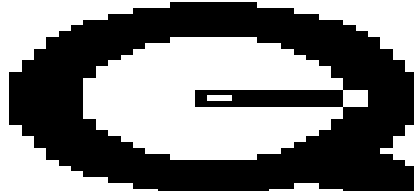
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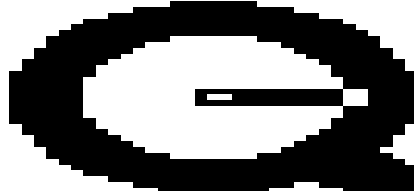
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