

April 2026 Update
from the Colorado Forest Health Council (CFHC) Committee on Leveraging
Resources

The Committee on Leveraging Resources identified a vision for the year 2025: *to align grant programs with forest planning needs, for ease and equity of access.*

After reviewing existing resources, hearing presentations, and having discussions as a committee, the committee identified four common pain points that communities/organizations face in applying for funding:

- Capacity
- Match requirements
- Timeline mismatches (examples: mismatch in timelines between forest management planning, grant applications, grant acceptances, reimbursements, forest management actions, management outcomes, reporting requirements, etc.)
- Lack of funding for communities in earlier stages of readiness

Throughout the year we heard from grant program administrators about how existing funding programs relieve one or more of these pain points. We also discussed how the Colorado Forest Resilience Planning Guide can inform grant programs to better align with community needs as they move through stages of readiness.

With these considerations in mind, we identified three concepts for the CFHC to explore in greater depth:

- State revolving loan program that allows for financing related to forest health, addressing timeline mismatch between paying for work and receiving grant reimbursements
- Sustained investment in local wood processing and workforce development
- Allow (or expand the ability for) state grants to cover capacities relevant at each stage of readiness (examples: administrative capacity, technical expertise, communications, etc.), using the Colorado Forest Resilience Planning Guide to point to types of capacity, indicators of readiness, and possible outcomes.

More work and subject matter expertise is needed from the CFHC to move each of these recommendations forward.