

**2015 Wildlife Grants Partners
Webinar Transcript
October 15, 2015**

>>Lori Young: Hi. Welcome to the first of what I hope are many webinars that will provide you with quick and timely information for use by the field

I'm Lori Young, the Wildlife Training Coordinator at the National Training Center, in Phoenix and I want to thank you for joining us.

The purpose of this webinar is to let you guys know how you can apply for grants to fund some on-the-ground projects to improve wildlife habitat.

We'll get to your questions at the end

So, with us today is Linda Cardenas, the BLM's National Liaison to the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation.

She is a Wildlife Biologist with the Bureau's Washington Office Division of Fish and Wildlife, but her home office is at the Elk Foundation's World Headquarters in Missoula, Montana.

Linda has been with the Bureau for 14 years and in her current position a little over 4 years.

Prior to this, she served as the Assistant Field Manager for Renewable Resources at the Missoula Field Office and as a Supervisory NRS with the Las Vegas Field Office.

Also with us today, from Santa Fe, New Mexico, is John Sherman.

As with many of us these days, John wears a lot of hats.

He's the BLM New Mexico Wildlife, Riparian, Challenge Cost Share, and now also the Fisheries Program Lead.

John has been heavily involved with BLM grant partners including the National Wild Turkey Federation and Quail Unlimited.

John has been with the Bureau for 28 years.

He started out his career as a Wildlife Biologist in Carlsbad, New Mexico and has been in his current position since 2007.

So, before I turn the program over to our speakers, there's just a couple of housekeeping items to take care of.

This program is being recorded and will be posted to the NTC Knowledge Resource Center website in a few days. I will send out a notice to the State Office Wildlife Program Leads for dissemination to the field once it's uploaded with directions on how you can access it. Or you can search the NTC KRC and type Grants into the search box and the information should pop up.

Also speaking of information, in the e-mail that I sent out yesterday, hopefully you received it in time, but in that e-mail is the link to the KRC where the handouts for today's presentation are located.

So, if you're at your computer you might want to take a minute to download those so you can follow along. I added a few new handouts this morning, but they'll always be there after the presentations as well.

And it would be a great help if you guys could tell me—let me know who's on. So if you're watching in a conference room if you could just jot you names down and then FAX it in to me that would be great.

The FAX number is 602-906-5619 or if you're at your computer you can send me an e-mail.

That's just so that we can follow-up with you and it gives us an idea of how many people attended.

So with that, I will turn it over to Linda and John and they're ready to tell you about the Grants Partner process.

>>Linda Cardenas: Thank you, Lori and thanks so much all of you folks who made time out of your busy schedule to join us this morning. We're hoping this information will be timely and will help you get a better handle on some of the opportunities that are out there, so that we can have a lot more value added to the work that you're are doing on the ground.

So the first slide here, some of you may recognize the gentleman in the center there that's Dale Tribby who is recently retiring from the Bureau, out of the Mile City Field Office.

We owe a great deal of gratitude to Dale for his many decades of working with the Turkey Federation as a Partner Lead and Technical Representative on their Committee.

Dale has turned that over to John Sherman and the Washington Office now is working with John as the Partnership Lead for the Turkey Federation.

In my role I work primarily with the Elk Foundation but I also work very closely with the Mule Deer Foundation.

So, between the two of us we're covering three of the Bureau's largest and most valuable wildlife partners.

And all of you know who work in the field; I know you have your own partnerships developed on the local level.

We work with a lot of other partner at the Bureau: Partners in Flight, Wild Sheep Foundation, Bat Conservation International, Trout Unlimited, Trust for Public Lands and many, many Friends groups.

So, we're highlighting these three wildlife partners today, based primarily on their level of participation and the decades -long relationships we've had with them and what they can offer the Bureau.

One thing -- I would like to ask before I get started here -- when you guys reply back to Lori, I'd be interested to know how many of you are active members with a wildlife conservation partner?

I find that information is very helpful to me in understanding the level of knowledge and experience people have working with partners

If you haven't done it before or have personal involvement with it, it's kind of a new -- new information, . . . knowledge of how these no-profits work - what motivates them , what their concerns are.

How we as an agency make it hard for them to work with us.

So, I would encourage you if you're not actively engaged with partners at this time that you put it in your work plan to try to get more involved.

And John and I are just going to kinda go back and forth with these slides and talk and add information as we go.

It's gonna be pretty informal here.

This slide, I just wanted to kind of pull it together so people realize you know, these partners are really different but they have a lot in common.

And even though we say the Mule Deer Foundation or Turkey, or Elk, all of them have in their mission statements that their goals are to conserve all wildlife and habitat.

But they raise money based on these flagship species and so any types of projects that they fund, had best have a really strong connection to those species.

All of these partners want to work with state and Federal agencies to accomplish their missions.

They really need to do this to stay relevant.

They do work with private landowners; they work on other, you know, private lands.

But it's imperative that the agencies make the opportunity available to engage their organizations.

Wouldn't you say John?

>>John Sherman: Yeah.

Most definitely, Linda.

Yeah and this slide is really good that in that a lot of times, at least I'm finding in New Mexico, that many of the volunteers that are associated with one organization are also associated with another... the multi-

membership. You know, with RMEF, and National Wild Turkey Federation, and Trout Unlimited, and all of them. It seems like they draw those type of people and usually those type of people are very active in finding out what kind of management is going on on their public lands - the lands they recreate on. So...

>>Linda Cardenas>> Those will be the ones that provide comments, oftentimes, to your NEPA planning documents

>>JOHN SHERMAN : Yep, Exactly.

>>LINDA CARDENAS: So all these organizations, we as Federal employees who get our budget s every year given to us. We have to remember that they rely on volunteers and memberships to raise operating funds.

The funds that you are going to be asking for in these grants are hard earned dollars.

And so, we really have to be sensitive that every dollar gets put to the best and highest use possible.

These partners often work together and I'm sure that some of you have some experiences that sometimes they do compete with one another and other organizations – so we also need to be a little sensitive to, you know, what --how they may be stepping on each other's toes or trying to avoid it and that sort of thing.

And that just takes some savvy in getting to know your partners and what's sensitive and what isn't.

But they often do work together.

>>JOHN SHERMAN: One other thing I just wanted to say, is you know, other outside the grant opportunities, the actual money coming in, most of these organizations and their local chapters, really like to participate with Federal agencies on-the- ground, to, you know, help out with, if you've got maintenance needs on certain things, just to get them out on the ground, they love to do that kind of work. So that, in-kind service, actually, you know, can be converted into volunteer hours and monetary value and can be used to match other Federal dollars coming in, too

>>LINDA CARDENAS: Exactly. It helps invigorate their membership base which then yields greater fundraising success. And then, last but not least, we all know that our external partners and organizations do have an influence on law maker and agency agendas.

Yeah, this may be self-evident but it's worth repeating, benefits, of course, expanded work capacity and accomplishments, enhanced social license. Some offices are pretty conflicted in certain areas with certain land users and constituents.

By working with these third parties, we can oftentimes build greater public good will and support for our programs. They can knock on doors and open opportunities that Federal employees and organizations tend not to be able to do.

And then, also, by working with these partners, you know, the Bureau is very supportive of this, and they recognize that it is the direction we have to go with our business model. It's here to stay with us and if we are to meet our mission objectives and goals we really need to bring them into our business practices. So by working side-by-side we increase our knowledge and awareness and understanding of the public's needs and interests.

So, a little bit about the Mule Deer Foundation. We just signed a new MOU in July of this year

And they are very interested in getting a little more organized, a little more structured in identifying some work priorities that the Bureau can focus on on an annual basis. So stay tuned for that.

We will be, you know, having a meeting in early January or February to hammer that out. And I would encourage you that if you have some thoughts or Ideas for how this organization might be more active or engaged in what your field office goals and needs, are, just send me an e-mail.

They are a smaller organization, headquartered in Salt Lake City, Utah, 40,000, members, 140 chapters; their grants tend to be smaller with more localized chapter management and decision-making.

And what this points to is that's where those personal relationships that you develop with your local chapters can have a big effect on the success of your grant requests

Wouldn't you say, John?

>>JOHN SHERMAN>> Most definitely, yeah. I think the Mule Deer Foundation is a lot like the National Wild Turkey Federation in their process, Linda, from my familiarity here in New Mexico, In that they have a regional person, is that correct that represents.

>>LINDA CARDENAS: Each state does have a lead, and thanks for bringing that up. John does have a slide or handout for you guys that will talk about, you know, who your points of contacts are. I'll be working on that for Mule Deer as well as for RMEF

That's one of the reasons we want your e-mail so I can forward that out to you, so you can see who your contacts are and deadlines for grants, et cetera.

The Mule Deer Working Group works very closely with the Mule Deer Foundation and I will give a shout-out to Elroy Masters, our Wildlife Lead in AZ.

Elroy works very closely with the Mule Deer Working Group as well,

And anyway, there's a new GIS map layer that shows Priority Conservation Areas for mule deer, that was developed with the western state Fish and Wildlife Agencies, so make sure you get a copy of that and maybe we can you some downloaded spatial layers.

I'm going to turn that over to John.

>>JOHN SHERMAN: Okay. National Wild Turkey Federation.

They have a little bit bigger organization, they've been around a long time. They have approximately 230,000 members

The Bureau has an MOU, in place that was recently signed in 2011.

Their structure as far as the project proposals, the submission process is a little bit --not an organized, established system.

It's more get to know the right people and that kind of thing.

So, I say grant and partnership opportunities with the National Wild Turkey Federation -- they do have the grant opportunities, and they call it their Superfund Program. It's actually associated with the State hierarchy, the state president, the Regional Biologist, and some of the local chapters, because that's where the money is raised totally for that grant program

There's also other partnership opportunities.

The National Wild Turkey Federation is engaged throughout much of the United States, especially with Forest Service, somewhat in the Northwest with stewardship contracting/agreements.

And then in other places the use of traditional assistance agreements to actually have them come on board, as an active partner, and utilizing them for doing habitat work for us, doing the contracting and areas where it just takes more time for us.

It's best to just turn it over to them.

And it gives them kind of a feeling that they are part of that landscape project.

The -- The National Wild Turkey Federation, although their mission is dedicated to the conservation of the wild turkey and the preservation of our hunting heritage, they also are interested in habitat management of all species.

They have a very active riparian habitat management program with the NWTF

I'm trying to link them up with our National Riparian Service Team and see how they can benefit us with that riparian habitat management.

So does it mean that your projects can only benefit turkey?

No, as I said they would love to benefit a multiple list of species in each of their projects.

Throughout the country they funded projects for sage-grouse, for riparian obligate species like yellow-billed cuckoo, they've done work to improve habitat for antelope, fence modification, all kinds of projects and they're interested in all of it. So how do we go about applying for this money?

The National Wild Turkey Federation kind of saw this coming and they really wanted to be in a position to where they could work with Federal agencies and state agencies and other NGO'S that had large plots of land on the landscape.

And so, last year they came up with the Big 6 which are Focal Landscapes scattered throughout the United States and I'll show you a map here in just a minute. But there's these Big 6 include focal landscapes that are pretty much represented in each state throughout the United States. The areas of concern were established to help identify and in a lot of cases align themselves with the focal landscapes of other agencies and other entities. With that said, they've got this initiative, they just released it. They're looking for us to come to them and to establish that partnership. They really want to work with us and they're reaching out.

I think that reaching out is also the RMEF and Mule Dee are also, in their various programs, isn't that right, Linda?

>>LINDA CARDENAS: Yeah, they're moving towards larger landscapes and trying to invest their resources into larger areas that will have a bigger bang for the buck, overall. Instead of those random acts we all talk about.

>>JOHN SHERMAN: in this slide, you can see the National Wild Turkey Federation, the small map, and I'll show you a bigger one in the next slide.

But primarily the yellow and the upper blue is primarily the ones the BLM can make use of, by trying to see if our projects overlay their Focal Landscapes.

And as I understand it, even if it's outside one of their landscapes they will still fund a project. This is just their most recent effort to align their efforts, their efforts on the ground with our efforts on the ground.

These bullets to the left are some of the objectives of what they would like to see accomplished, so therein lies, that when you're developing your proposal, if you hit on these points or on one of these points, and really elaborated on it that's how you're going to gain ground on the competitive part of getting your project funded—is by addressing these points.

The next slide will depict those that are directly associated with the BLM in the western United States.

This slide actually came from the NWTF and they've cut out BLM acres outside of their focal landscapes and so these landscapes and the green within are the actual BLM lands in their some of their focal landscapes throughout the West.

So these are important areas for them

>>LINDA CARDENAS: And John, I think we can get those geospatial data so that we can prepare layers for people to use for their own analysis

>>JOHN SHERMAN: We can. Yeah, we can. And it's readily available.

I've got a list of all of the actual biologists – Regional Biologists for each of the states and they're the primary contact.

You know, the banquets that are held in these little local towns, they're really cool banquets, you know.. I don't know how many of you all have ever been to one of them. But they're really neat they usually have big auctions and they have a meal, and they have a presentation of some habitat projects that they've funded and that they're proud of and they really present it well. And so, just to go to those activities, those events, and make yourself known, that's part of the process, right there. As well as introducing yourself or getting to know the Regional Biologist for your particular state

Basically, so you contact this individual and let them know what your project is. Maybe give them a field trip and show them, let them be a part of it. And, you know, let them know . . .

>>LINDA CARDENAS: John, sorry to interrupt. That list, I believe is posted in the handouts.

>>JOHN SHERMAN: Okay. It is. Okay. So it is posted in the handouts. There's one vacancy I believe, but otherwise, every state is covered with a Regional Biologist.

So, you know, contact them, your local chapter representatives just kind of present your projects, a little write up, a paragraph addressing 1 or 2 of the previous bullets, and with photos, maybe before and then what you want to accomplish, and that's basically it.

>>LINDA CARDENAS: Compared to the Elk Foundation process, this is really easy guys.

But it's critical. The relationship, just making sure they know you in that relationship, building that relationship -that's how your success is going to end up in funding and adding funding to a maybe a larger landscape project that you've got working on or that you're working on where other partners are bringing their moneys to the table.

Therein lies another part, if you've got other partners that are going to come to this landscape and to provide funding.

That's a big part of it as well that would make your proposal more successful in getting funding is many partners.

So very easy process.

Primarily it's just getting to know your Regional Biologist and the local chapter representatives and then go from there.

And that's basically it.

Now, after the project is done, we're still not finished.

Take photos of that project.

Present the results at the local chapter, maybe at one of their monthly meetings, or maybe at their banquet.

Give a little slide presentation, and then continue to actively work with the local chapter and Regional Biologist.

So, out years. You want more funding, you want to complete your project - maybe it's a multi-year project. So, keep that relationship that partnership going and keep them up to date on future projects so like I say, funding in the future may be available

>>LINDA CARDENAS: And this advice holds for all partners – very applicable to all three.

>>JOHN SHERMAN: Yeah, It is and it's very important.

If any of you have any questions, you know, I'm always available, e-mail or call me.

I'd like to talk to you about the National Wild Turkey Federation, and any other partner that I'm familiar with.

I'll gladly provide my input.

I'll turn it over to you Linda to talk about Rocky Mountain

>>LINDA CARDENAS: Thank you. A lot of people on-line, I notice have worked with the Elk Foundation in the past.

And just real quick, we've been partners for 31 years since 1984. This is the largest organization – wildlife organization that we are formally partnering with -- 205,000 members and growing. Many of them are hunter-conservationists. They have over 500 chapters across the U.S.

Collectively they've done with their partners over 9000 projects in 49 states.

And they have exceeded 6.5 million acres that were either protected through easement and acquisition or were enhanced. And that last bullet, it was still in draft as you can see but our conservation portfolio is that with the BLM as this partner is valued in excess of 114 million dollars. That gets people's attention. They are very good at what they do.

Here's just a slide that shows, you know, that these chapters are all over the country. Florida. How many people in Florida ever get to even see an elk? But there are people there raising money for elk habitat, the same thing across the U.S.

One of the things they do that we don't get that involved in --they do elk restoration. The habitat for elk, it used to be they were all across the United States and RMEF is providing hundreds of thousands of dollars to work with State Fish and Game to restore elk into their historic range.

So these are just the examples of projects that would be applicable to any of the partners.

They all like these types of projects.

Of course, prescribed burning, weed control. This is where you as wildlife folks, I don't know if we have any fuels people or range people on the webinar today, but let's make sure that those other programs realize that this partner, wildlife partner funding is available to support their programs as well.

I like this slide with the goats.

Seeding, planting, p-j and forest thinning, aspen regeneration that's a big one for RMEF. They're getting ready getting to develop a national initiative to refocus our attention on conserving aspen stands. And then riparian restoration, as John said, Turkey Federation is kind of the lead partner, I would say. They love riparian project. There's no rule that says you can't have multiple partners on the same projects. So highlight their strengths and leverage everybody's resources

Fence modification, this is something, if you have need for funding to help with a fencing project, a couple of things to keep in mind. Don't ask for money to hire a contractor to rip out a fence. They get really offended if you don't think to invite their volunteers to help. These people are excellent at fence removal and don't cost you a dime. Also being able to construct enclosures, maybe around springs or other sensitive resources or if you have a reseeded project that needs to be excluded from grazing, they can often help with that.

And water developments are huge and they are very satisfying for volunteers to be a part of, because you know, you get it done, you see it, it's there, it lives on and does great things

One of the things, and John you can jump in on turkey – I don't know how much they are involved with research and other science based projects. But the Elk Foundation does provide funding for projects such as migration studies.

And they've done a lot currently, as well as in the past, with predator-prey relationships.

You know with the reintroduction of wolves, there was a lot of controversy over, you know, their effects on ungulate herds.

And so RMEF really believes in science-based management and they are providing state fish and wildlife agencies with considerable funding to look at these complex relationships.

The photo in the center was an elk calf mortality study that was done in the Black Foot that was done about a decade ago, about 5 year study

And of course, universities and other agencies provide research expertise for that

The NWTF have partnered with Sol Ross a university out of TX to look at the before and after mechanical p-j thinning to look at the response of Mearns Quail, so yeah, much like RMEF they are very interested in science and research-type projects as well

That's good information to know. We just had a meeting with the RMEF Science Leads and the University of Montana. They want to take a hard look at the effectiveness of many of these types of habitat treatments on wildlife population response

So if any of you have projects that you are just getting started with or a landscape where it might lend itself, they are looking to develop a monitoring program that will probably go for 3-5 years with funding to U of M.

This slide is to remind me to remind you guys, that no matter what your position is on hunting, the members in most of these partners groups are very avid and supportive of hunting on public lands. And so the funds that they raise goes towards improving habitat for one of the reasons so that they'll have opportunities to get out there and hunt.

So we talked about the Mule Deer Foundation, their grant process, they do have a form. It's pretty simple. That's also going to be posted in the handouts that you will have.

The Elk Foundation Stewardship grants and when they say stewardship they mean habitat enhancement.

I have to explain that because don't think forestry BLM stewardship. No, no, no. Okay, it's habitat enhancement.

Those forms are also out there in the handouts.

Got a little bit of background about how this works. Now we saved them for last, because as this large national organization the Elk Foundation has a well-established granting process and it would be helpful for you guys to have a broader understanding of how it all works.

PAC is not a Political Advisory Committee. It's Project Advisory Committee.

They're in all states that have wild and free ranging elk under formal State Elk Management Plans.

And those plans must include current or future hunting opportunities.

These PAC committees promote interagency support for RMEF projects and guarantee that limited funds are expended in the best possible way.

PAC grants fund habitat enhancement, wildlife management and research as we've talked about

These are the states that have active Project Advisory Committees. As you can see Missouri, Arkansas, Kentucky and Tennessee. Those all will have or do have huntable elk populations now, thanks for their assistance and restoration

So PAC members typically for the BLM that will be your State Wildlife Program Lead.

Forest Service also will have a local Regional Biologist on the Committee, University of whatever is there, wildlife department, and the RMEF State Chair and RMEF Regional Director for that state will actually run that committee.

So this is a photo of the Montana PAC.

They meet annually here at the Elk Foundation.

And the duties of this committee, and it's pretty interesting, I would invite -- you're all invited to attend these meetings as an observer. You're not allowed to jump in there and voice your opinions on stuff. But if you're there and you're promoting a project and you have one in the hopper, if you're there they can ask you questions. So, what the committee does is they review the projects prior to the meeting. They may be contacting the applicant with questions. During this committee, they candidly discuss the merits of a project. That was part of how it was set up. They want these wildlife professionals to openly and freely express their candid opinions on the merits of those projects.

>>JOHN SHERMAN: As a PAC member, I would encourage anyone out there to actually go and present projects versus sending them in and allowing the PACs to answer the questions on their own without input from the project coordinator.

| It really benefits your success rate of getting funding through that process.

>>LINDA CARDENAS: It does. Yeah. So, this is just to show you for the Elk Foundation, how successful these volunteers are. These volunteers, as we've talked about are, you know, they're hard-working, average, middle class people who are willing to give up many hours of evenings and weekends, working for the cause.

The most recent PAC funding available, across the states, almost 2 ½ million dollars and we have to remember that that's a lot of raffle tickets that they have to sell to raise those dollars

Funding criteria –competitive proposals always have to be science-based and that's really no problem for our agency. They have to have a direct benefit to elk, and if we have fuels folks on the line or others in other programs, you may not be as familiar with connecting the dots for the wildlife benefits. So we encourage you to work with your wildlife leads before you submit a proposal to make sure we can connect those dots back to the species of concern

You can't request any more than 50% of the project costs from the Elk Foundation. And you need to coordinate with your state wildlife agency representative. We need an e-mail confirming that they agree with the proposal that you are submitting or a letter of support, something to that effect.

Always remember, your grant proposals cannot ask for funding for planning, administrative, or overhead costs, no permanent federal employee salaries, please, that has to be paid for by others.

And the funding is good for 2 years and that's also the same with Mule Deer Foundation. And John, is that the window that Turkey gives for their grants, do you know?

>>JOHN SHERMAN: Yeah, and actually you can work that out with the State hierarchy, the president, and what not. And you could even possibly allow it go even a little bit further if you need more time

>>LINDA CARDENAS: They're more flexible.

RMEF is not flexible.

If you don't get the funding spent within two years you will forfeit it.

Please keep that in mind.

Now if you don't get a burn window or something, we all understand that.

The money will go back to their coffers and you're welcome to reapply.

It does happen.

But anyway, remember they don't fund capital facilities or equipment, again, salaries of permanent positions.

But if you have a work crew, a contract crew, or say the jumpers are coming out to do some thinning, anything that you can sort of look at that is sort of a contracting relationship; they can provide funding for that.

They don't do inventory, mapping or planning and please don't ask for funding for events or projects that have already occurred.

That does happen.

Be sensitive about road closures and gates although we'll talk a little bit about access briefly later.

They do recognize the importance of reducing road densities but politically, it's really awkward for most of their members who don't want to see roads closed.

Don't ask them to fund those particular things.

I'm not going to read everything on here. You guys can look at this on your own.

This submission process is pretty well defined. Your state wildlife lead will be main point of contact with the Elk Foundation.

When the Call for Proposals are ready, your PAC person will send those out to the offices.

And we like to get them back, right John, at least two weeks before the RMEF deadline.

And that gives us a chance, and I'm available as well, to review your proposals and offer suggestions, if you're forgetting something or maybe you need to emphasize something that you're not or, you know, whatever.

We can provide input to strengthen your proposals but give us some lead time though, so we can help you.

And the PAC meeting date and location we have a window when they typically happen within about a two week date every year, about the same time.

And I will be sending out a chart to you guys that will have when those PACs occur, when you have to have your proposals you know, estimates, so you can plan ahead.

Basically, some organizations, like Mule Deer Foundation, they'll take it at any time of the year.

They do recommend that you get it in the first quarter of the year because that's when their banquets are happening and they actually have money.

If you wait until August, they may have already spent it by then.

You need to be strategic.

With RMEF it's very structured.

And PAC proposals are due, in Montana, I think, Idaho and Oregon, as early as the first week in December, so that's right around the corner.

Other states kind of trickle out the rest of the year, through June, I think, California and Nevada go that late.

So the PAC may recommend full funding, partial or no funding.

Once the PAC makes a recommendation, if you're successful you'll hear within 45 days.

You'll get a notification letter, telling you, you've been successful for either the whole amount or a partial amount.

And then, John as a PAC member, and others, should be notifying the field office folks if they did not get funding to discuss what the reasons were for that.

And that's a learning process that is really valuable.

If for some reason you submitted a project that didn't get funding and you don't know why feel free to contact your PAC representative, or you can contact me and I can find out for you.

Last but not least, if, oftentimes, money is left on the table which we hate to see happen. It's really heart-breaking. In one state there was over \$100,000 left that no one even asked for.

So, let's all look for ways to leverage our Federal funding do more on the ground

Typical reasons, why you might not get funding; cost per acre too high.

And this is important for you wildlife folks, make sure your fuels people understand this. There are ways to get that cost per acre down by how you structure your project. Adequate information may be missing, And then, bottom line budget limitations, you know those pots of money vary from year to year and sometimes we have lots, and sometimes, we don't have so much

And then, again, we talked about volunteers try to include them where you can, where it makes sense.

And then John mentioned several of these pointers. Invite field staff from these partners out to look at projects on the ground. If you're doing a large landscape, you got five years or more worth of work out there, get them out there on the ground so that they can see what you're thinking so that they can be prepared for the request for funding.

And I'm not gonna go through all of these

>>JOHN SHERMAN: But you know, Linda, these are so important for every organization -- every partner that we partner with. The follow-up . Once we get the funding it's important for us to let that organization know how we used the funds, did we--how it went on the ground, was it successful? That may not come out for, you know, several years. But it's important for us to follow up and say, hey this project really worked out well. Thank you

>>LINDA CARDENAS: Exactly. It's not just about the money, it's about building long-term relationships. So this slide is a little busy, it didn't chop off what I needed to. One key point here I want to bring up, even if you feel like you are almost fully funded for a nice project that-- let's say your burning one thousand acres and you've already got all your fuels money.

Let's not forget our partners when times are good.

Let's not just remember them when we need something. Because here's how that works; invite them to participate, you know, even it's five thousand dollars.

To be a part of a one thousand acre project, it's awesome for that partner to be able to claim those accomplishments, as well.

Because that's really how it all works with their ability to survive and raise funds and stuff.

Let's think of them in lean times as well god times.

Now the reseeding project. If you're asking for funding to help with reseeding, do your homework, work with your range personnel. Make sure you're planning to rest that area from grazing because they won't fund it if the cows are going back out immediately. Ranchers, permittees if they're involved they're expected to help with fencing projects.

And also, if your project is clearly benefiting another species. Please make a phone call, at least, to say that yeah I checked with Mule Deer Foundation or Turkey and they're not able to help. Okay. If it's really benefiting mule deer and you never even asked that partner, it hurts their feelings at the Elk Foundation. Multi-year planning projects are great

There's some advice there for including that information in your proposals.

Closing the grant loop, John mentioned, project completion reports. Timeliness is very important. Let's get those reports back to the partners as soon as we can so they can count those accomplishments in their year-end reports

Quality and accuracy, extremely important. Photos, photos, photos, photos. You can't take enough photos or videos. They love this stuff. They use it in like for Bugle magazine, publications, websites, social media. They love to broadcast the agency as well as their success with the agency. Here are some good examples of photos Work crews, action photos, volunteers, pre and post treatment shots from the same vantage, landscapes, scenics of project sites that give a sense of the habitat. And critters using the project site any time any time, pre and post, is very helpful.

We do have some application forms – I'm just going to throw them up here in case some of you didn't pull them down. The Elk Foundation has a full set of instructions for how to fill out the form. The form is a little intimidating to look at but it's mostly just fill-in-the-blanks. I'm sure a lot of you have already done this. They aren't as time consuming as you may think. Here's what it looks like, just kinda tab your way through it. This area gets a little challenging, I think, for some people but it's really important if you break out the treatment types for your polygons that the project areas by type and size of the treatment, time window of when you want to do it and then the project cost.

And here's where you can show matching funds from other partners. And we're here, the PAC committee representatives, and myself, and the Elk Foundation are all available to help you with these project proposals.

We're at 11:00 and just want to thank everyone for your time and for joining us this morning. It's very important that we increase our participation and our success in these efforts. So with that we can open it up for questions, if there are any.

>> OPERATOR: And our question comes from Darren Long.

>>Darren Long: This is Darren, so if you're working with your local chapters and they're having a bad year, for example they're a little short of funding for various reasons, is it possible to go outside of the state and receive funding and work with chapters that do have funding?

>>JOHN SHERMAN: Well, Linda do you want to start off or do you want me to.

>>LINDA CARDENAS: For the Elk Foundation, for each state, the chapters go out and do all their fundraising and then those dollars get rolled into one pot for that state. It is possible, but that request would probably go from one RMEF PAC committee leader to another state's committee leader if they have extra funding and sometimes it happens. That would not be in our jurisdiction as agency people to make that happen or even ask – we could ask for it. What typically happens with unspent funds, is that if we don't do a second round and spend them with a new round of proposals in that given state, it'll

go back to headquarters, at the Elk Foundation. And then it goes into sort of their general mission. No one wants to see that happen. And with Mule Deer, keep in mind, they get a little sensitive and protective of their turf. They want their hard earned funds spent in their backyard, pretty much. But I think there might be opportunities for sharing, especially if you have a landscape that goes across two states.

>>JOHN SHERMAN: Darren, with the National Wild turkey Federation they you know if the chapters, you know did not a very lucrative year, and the turnouts at banquets was not very good or maybe some of the chapters have folded or maybe they didn't hold a banquet for whatever reason the funds are down. My suggestion would be at least maintain a good communication line between you and that Regional Biologist because oftentimes he or she will have other funding sources that the National Wild turkey Federation has available such as the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation they actually have some grant opportunities through the NWTF but they may have other sources. As far as funding that would be the way. But if you were to actually to need help on the ground that communication link will also enable the call for assistance, maintenance on projects, building projects for the volunteers from the chapters, and not just NWTF but the other organizations as well to come out and give you a hand and to actually do stuff on the ground for you even though they can't provide actual funding. So that would be my suggestion, to keep a good communication link between you and that Regional Biologist or Regional Representative for that organization.

>>LINDA CARDENAS: I could also add in NV the funding – fundraising levels has been a little lower than in other states and Headquarters has been supplementing the last couple of years with national funds to help those PACs that haven't been as successful for various reasons. It's recognized that there are reasons. We're trying to get the money out to help the habitat and the wildlife in all the states

>>Darren Long: Thank you.

>>JOHN SHERMAN: you bet

>>LINDA CARDENAS: Again, John and I are both available as resources to consult with you or your project ideas. I will mention one last thing, this is the time of year when we start asking – the Washington Office starts asking the field for nominations for national awards—wildlife conservation awards.

And when you do your project completion reports that might be the time you may start looking to see do you have a project or an individual that may be competitive for one of these awards. We're trying to make that process easy for nominations. But feel free to contact us if you have thoughts on that as well. We do recognize that asking external partners for funding, writing proposals – This is all additional work and that you guys are willing to take on and I think it's important for managers to recognize that this type of activity is what really differentiates the superior performer from the exceptional performer or vice versa. We're going to try to do a better job at the National Office to make sure your supervisors and managers realize how much we appreciate the effort that you put in to partner grants and award nominations.

>>JOHN SHERMAN: Excellent point, Linda. If just want to reiterate, please, if you know of projects or individuals that are deserving of these awards, please submit those projects/individuals and or offices—entire offices, please submit those for an award. There's a bunch of them out there.

>>LINDA CARDENAS: And it wouldn't be right if I didn't say something about access. In addition to habitat projects RMEF is a big land trust partner and they do a lot of easements, and acquisitions, heavily involved in LWCF and they've been doing great work acquiring parcels to help unlock Federal lands. So if you guys have any thoughts or ideas on potential projects let me know because it's a real top priority for them right now

All right. That's all I have so thank you everyone

>>JOHN SHERMAN: Thank you all

>>Lori Young: Thank you so much. If you have ideas for other webinars that you'd be interested in hearing, then please send me those ideas and we'll see if we can't pull it together. Appreciate your time and I hope to hear from you.

>>JOHN SHERMAN: Thank you, Lori

>>LINDA CARDENAS: Thank you, Lori

>>Lori Young: Thanks, John and Linda. I appreciate your time