



New Mexico
**Department of Finance
and Administration**

**Infrastructure Planning
and Development Division**

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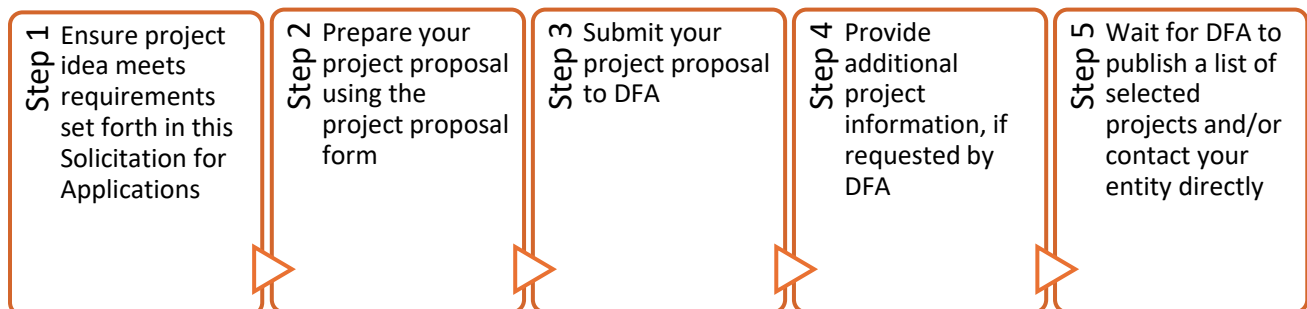
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Solicitation of Applications for Public Land Project

Project Proposals

The New Mexico Department of Finance and Administration (DFA) is seeking project proposals that create, expand and/or restore public lands across New Mexico, such as through voluntary land acquisition from willing sellers. Proposed projects should strengthen public access, enhance habitat connectivity, and promote long-term ecological resilience. Program funding may be used for one or multiple projects.

DFA invites members of the public, local governments, Tribes, nonprofit organizations, and other interested entities, in partnership with a State, local or Tribal governmental entity, to submit project proposals in accordance with the process outlined below. Tribal government proposals may provide for State-Tribal co-stewardship of the land but must not restrict or deny general public access. Projects must identify and demonstrate commitment from the State, local or Tribal governmental entity who will be the recipient of the land or interest in the land (such as a conservation easement or land use restriction) and be responsible for any ongoing land management responsibilities.



Evaluation Criteria for Project Reviews

All submitted projects will undergo a review process using established criteria, that will be evaluated by DFA and a cross-agency review panel consisting of representatives of the New Mexico Department of Wildlife, the New Mexico Energy, Minerals, and Natural Resources Department, the Office of Natural Resources Trustee, and the Indian Affairs Department.

Evaluation criteria, set forth below, will be applied to assess, score, and rank eligible projects. These criteria will guide DFA and the cross-agency review panel in comparing projects and selecting one or more projects that best advance the objectives in this SA.

Following completion of individual project evaluations, DFA and the cross-agency review panel will review the recommended portfolio as a whole to ensure the selected project(s) maximize the benefits from the funds available.

These criteria and portfolio-level considerations enable DFA and the cross-agency review panel to ensure the funds are awarded and utilized in accordance with the appropriation and applicable state accounting requirements.

Evaluation Criteria

Willing Seller: Sale of the land (or interest in land) is undertaken with a willing seller on a voluntary basis and without coercion or pressure. This is a threshold criterion; proposals that do not meet this criterion will not be evaluated. (PASS/FAIL)

Available for Immediate Acquisition: Land is available for immediate acquisition, meaning that ownership or use rights are clear, the seller is ready and willing to proceed, and there are no legal, administrative, or social constraints that would delay transfer (such as disputes, pending claims, encumbrances, or required relocations). Proportion of due diligence completed prior to application (e.g., appraisal, survey, Phase 1 Environmental Assessment, etc.) will be considered in assigning a score for this criterion. Project proponent and sponsoring governmental entity must state a willingness and ability to enter into purchase agreement within 30 days of award. Clear explanation for how the project will be completed if the applicant receives the minimum amount requested from this program. (0-20 points)

Public Land Manager: A responsible governmental entity has been formally identified as the land manager, has confirmed its agreement and capacity to cover administration and land management costs in perpetuity, with no planned reliance on further state grant funding after completion of the purchase, and attests to the project meeting the respective governmental entity's natural resource priorities. Public land managers may include, but are not limited to, the New Mexico Department of Wildlife or the State Parks Division of the New Mexico Energy, Minerals, and Natural Resources Department. (0-20 points)

Public Access: Project allows for permanent general public recreational access, such as areas for fishing, hunting, boating, wildlife viewing, hiking, and other recreational activities. Proposals that expand existing New Mexico Wildlife Management Areas and/or State Parks will receive higher scores. (0-20 points)

Habitat Quality and Ecological Significance: Presence or preservation/protection of high-quality, rare, sensitive, or unique habitats or species on the parcel. Significance of the parcel for water resource benefits, such as improved water quality, aquifer recharge, and overall watershed health. Connectivity to other Local, State or Federal public lands and natural or cultural resources creating a larger benefit. Degree to which loss of the opportunity to acquire the land or an interest in the land, such as a conservation easement, could adversely impact natural resources. (0-20 points)

Partnership and Support: Evidence of broad support for the project. Evidence of cost sharing among parties. Information regarding long-term operational plans and proposed uses. (0-20 points)

Project Proposals Submission

Applicants must use the project proposal form available at <https://www.nmdfa.state.nm.us/infrastructure-planning-and-development-division/solicitation-of-applications-for-public-land-projects/> to submit a complete application. The application form includes five sections, and the project proposal must be emailed to PLP.Application@dfa.nm.gov to be considered for funding.

Applicants may submit questions to PLP.Application@dfa.nm.gov by 5:00 pm MDT on August 4, 2026. DFA will confer with the cross-agency review panel and post responses to all timely questions on the application website <https://www.nmdfa.state.nm.us/infrastructure-planning-and-development-division/solicitation-of-applications-for-public-land-projects/> not later than August 10, 2026.

Project proposals must be received by DFA by **5pm MDT on August 21, 2026**. Submit all questions and completed project proposals to DFA via email at PLP.Application@dfa.nm.gov.