



## Document 4a

For 12 February 2026 IRST meeting

# Eastern Oregon Steep Slopes and Mass Wasting: Rapid Systematic Literature Review Project 2026 Request for Proposals

**Announcement Date: Thursday, February 19, 2026**

**Full Proposals Due: Thursday, March 19, 2026, before 11:59 p.m. PT**

Late and/or incomplete applications will not be considered.

**Individual Requests: Not to exceed \$80,000**

**Anticipated Funding: 1 project, Total approx. \$80,000**

**Project Duration: Mid-May 2026 through October 30, 2026**

This RFP has been developed by the Independent Research and Science Team and support staff at the Institute for Natural Resources at Oregon State University as part of the Oregon Department of Forestry's Adaptive Management Program.

Available funding is set by the Adaptive Management Policy Committee (AMPC) based on Oregon Board of Forestry approval and is subject to change or rescission.

*The Institute for Natural Resources at Oregon State University is the housing agency of the Independent Research and Science Team.*

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## Acronyms

AMP	Adaptive Management Program
AMPC	Adaptive Management Program Committee
CEE	Collaboration for Environmental Evidence
DOI	Digital Object Identifier
HCP	Habitat Conservation Plan
INR	Institute for Natural Resources
IRST	Independent Research and Science Team
NMFS	National Marine Fisheries Service
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
OAR	Oregon Administrative Rules
ORS	Oregon Revised Statutes
OSU	Oregon State University
PFA	Private Forest Accord
PI	Principal Investigator
PRISMA	Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses
RFP	Request for Proposal
URL	Uniform Resource Locator
USFWS	US Fish and Wildlife Service

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## I. General Information

### A. Introduction

The Institute for Natural Resources (INR), acting on behalf of the Independent Research and Science Team (IRST) for the Oregon Department of Forestry’s Adaptive Management Program, seeks a contractor to undertake a rapid systematic literature review. The contractor shall review the evidence and knowledge gaps related to the impact hillslope processes have on draft Oregon Private Forest Accord Aquatic Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) species and their habitats in Eastern Oregon.

The IRST anticipates awarding one contract via this request for proposal (RFP). Any contract awarded through this RFP will have a specific timeline for completing the deliverables. The term of the contract is expected to end on **October 30, 2026** but may be extended past that date for follow-up questions, etc., upon mutual agreement of the parties.

### B. Schedule of Dates for Proposal Submission and Review

Item	Timeline
Request for proposal (RFP) announced	February 19, 2026
Written questions submission deadline	February 26, 2026
Responses to questions posted on website	March 5, 2026
Full proposals due	March 19, 2026 (before 11:59 pm Pacific Time)
Review period	March 19 – April 16, 2026
Tentative notice of funding decisions	Mid- to late-April
Notice to non-awardees	Late-April
Award agreement set up period	TBD
Awarded project begins	Approximately, mid- to late-May

**Note:** This timeline is subject to change. Any updates will be posted on Oregon State University’s (OSU) Institute for Natural Resources (INR) [IRST Grant Opportunities webpage](#).

### C. Eligibility Information

Full proposals may be submitted by **individuals** and organizations with the capacity, expertise, demonstrated experience, and qualifications to successfully complete the tasks and the deliverables. IRST members are also eligible proposers. As per Oregon Administrative Rules (OAR) [629-603-0200\(6\)e](#), “If an IRST member seeks to respond to an RFP, the IRST shall ensure RFP selections follow conflict of interest standards as established by the Oregon Government Ethics Commission.” [Oregon Government Ethics law](#) defines two types of conflicts of interest: actual conflicts of interest (ORS 244.020(1)) and potential conflicts of interest (ORS 244.020(13)).

The project’s lead Principal Investigator (PI) must be deemed eligible by their organization to receive extramural funding, if such funding is pursued. **Note:** Only one full proposal for each PI may be submitted.

## II. Overview, Purpose, and Statement of Work

### A. Overview and Purpose

#### Adaptive Management Program

Based on stakeholder negotiations documented in the [Private Forest Accord \(PFA\) Report](#), the Oregon legislature, in [Senate Bill 1501](#) of the 2022 session, directed the Board of Forestry to update the state’s forest practice rules and established the Adaptive Management Program (AMP).

The AMP will help design effectiveness monitoring of forest practices rules and inform future rulemaking to support the state’s application for a programmatic habitat conservation plan (HCP), and subsequent incidental take permits from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Fisheries and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). The goal of the program is to use the best available science to assess the effectiveness of rules for achieving the biological goals and objectives described in the HCP. The AMP includes two advisory bodies: (1) the Adaptive Management Program Committee (AMPC), which develops the policy direction for the program, including the research questions; and (2) the IRST, which supports the work of the AMPC by developing research and monitoring options in response to AMPC-developed research question packages, and oversees research and monitoring to address the policy direction.

#### Background and Project Overview

As per Chapter 3 of the PFA Report:

*“The goals of the PFA commitments regarding timber harvest on steep slopes is to provide large wood and sediment consistent with maintaining or improving aquatic habitat within large basins over long timeframes. (For the purposes of this Chapter, large basins are those of a size equivalent to those supporting independent populations of Oregon coastal coho salmon. In modeling to support the PFA, these are USGS HUC 4th Field [8-digit] basins). To accomplish this, sediment sources and debris flow runout paths will be identified and a subset of these will be managed during timber harvest activities to retain trees and other vegetation. These actions, together with other HCP commitments, are intended to provide high-quality habitat to support recovery and long-term conservation of the species covered by this HCP on private forestlands.” (p. 31)*

*“The PFA does not prescribe new management measures for landslide initiation zones or debris flow traversal channels in Eastern Oregon. The PFA authors agree that Eastern Oregon’s unique geologies and climates likely mean that these processes are different in magnitude, frequency, and impact on the covered species, when compared to Western Oregon. Similarly, the impact of timber harvesting on these processes is potentially different in Eastern Oregon. In light of this uncertainty, the PFA authors agree that the Adaptive Management Program examine the scientific literature on the impacts that hillslope processes have on the covered species in Eastern Oregon. The primary focus will be on upslope initiated*

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*shallow rapid slides and how timber harvesting may impact these in Eastern Oregon environments. A secondary and more limited focus is whether other hillslope processes that likely affect covered species are changed by forest practices.” (p. 36)*

In Aug 2024, the AMPC research question package pertaining to eastern Oregon steep slopes (Appendix A) was finalized:

Overarching Question: What impact do hillslope processes have on the covered species included in the draft HCP and their habitats in Eastern Oregon?

- Primary Focus: What does the literature say about upslope initiated shallow rapid slides and how timber harvesting may impact these in Eastern Oregon environments?
- Secondary Focus: Are there hillslope processes other than upslope initiated shallow rapid slides that may affect covered species within the draft Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) and are these processes changed by forest practices?

Only those amphibians and fish species identified in Section 1.4 of the PFA Report (2022) are considered “covered species,” as defined for use in developing a Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) consistent with USFWS and National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) (2016), and thus are relevant to the overarching question. Road impacts on shallow rapid slides were not considered for the primary and secondary focus questions. Similarly, other hillslope processes unrelated to mass wasting were excluded for the secondary focus question.

Based on these questions, in January 2025 the IRST submitted to the AMPC a research scoping proposal framing how these questions could be addressed using literature reviews, which would assess the robustness of conclusions based on the literature and identify key gaps that might prompt the need for additional research. The IRST conducted a scoping review to characterize the potential amount and nature of the existing relevant scientific literature. It was intended, not as a comprehensive literature review, but as a necessary first step to support the development of a research proposal package to inform the AMPC and Board of Forestry decisions about the utility of soliciting further literature review or research via requests for proposals. [For the primary focus question, the IRST’s scoping review provided a preliminary indication of the existing scientific research available that could potentially determine if shallow rapid slides are an important driver of riparian and stream habitats in eastern Oregon and if forest harvest is likely to influence characteristics \(e.g., initiation rate, size, runout distance\) of these slides. The IRST’s scoping review used a similar approach for the secondary focus question but considered other potentially important mass wasting processes and the influence of timber harvesting on those processes. Consistent with Appendix A, Section 3.3.8 from the PFA Report, the only hillslope processes considered for the secondary focus question were related to mass wasting.](#)

The Board of Forestry approved the AMPC research agenda, which included a rapid systematic literature review, in September 2025.

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## Relevant Documents

Document Name	Document Location
Private Forest Accord Report (2022), Chapter 3	<a href="https://www.oregon.gov/odf/aboutodf/documents/2022-odf-private-forest-accord-report.pdf">https://www.oregon.gov/odf/aboutodf/documents/2022-odf-private-forest-accord-report.pdf</a>
AMPC’s steep slopes research questions package (2025)	Appendix A of this RFP
IRST’s eastern Oregon steep slopes scoping proposal (2025)	<a href="https://ir.library.oregonstate.edu/concern/technical_reports/5d86p7775">https://ir.library.oregonstate.edu/concern/technical_reports/5d86p7775</a>
Collaboration for Environmental Evidence guidelines (2022)	<a href="https://environmentalevidence.org/information-for-authors/">https://environmentalevidence.org/information-for-authors/</a>
Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) Diagram (figure 1)	<a href="https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1743919110000403">https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1743919110000403</a>

## Purpose

OAR [629-603-0200\(6\)\(b\)](#) authorizes the IRST to develop an RFP in an open, competitive process for research projects in the AMPC-developed research agenda. The 2025 AMP research agenda calls for a rapid systematic literature review that will inform the extent of knowledge about whether forest harvesting on private lands in eastern Oregon are affecting hillslope processes that in turn may affect HCP-covered species and their habitats, [if the existing scientific research available that could potentially determine if shallow rapid slides are prevalent enough to be an important driver of riparian and stream habitats in eastern Oregon, and if forest harvest is likely to influence characteristics \(e.g., initiation rate, size, runout distance\) of these slides.](#)

The products and deliverables from this project will be used to evaluate and inform regulation, policy, technical guidance, training, and identify information gaps. The target audiences for this project are the Adaptive Management Policy Committee, the Board of Forestry, the Oregon Department of Forestry, the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, the National Marine Fisheries Service, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and ultimately Oregon’s citizens.

## B. Statement of Work

### Overview of the Specifications of Work

The contractor will conduct a rapid systematic literature review [about whether and how forest harvesting in eastern Oregon is likely to affect upslope initiated shallow rapid landslides and associated impacts on HCP-covered species and their habitats as per the finalized AMPC research questions \(for full contextual information see Appendix A\).](#) This review should extract data from the

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documents, summarize the state of knowledge, and identify research gaps. The following [is a summary of the core](#) elements:

- Meet regularly with the IRST;
- Follow Collaboration for Environmental Evidence (CEE) guidelines and collaborate with the IRST to develop a literature review protocol;
- Conduct a rapid review in accordance with the protocol;
- Analyze the evidence;
- Write a [final](#) technical report that documents the search and review process for transparency and replicability, summarizes the state of knowledge, identifies knowledge gaps, and includes summary of findings tables;
- Submit the final report and all supporting documentation, including data; and
- Participate in an after-action meeting at the end of the project.

Submission of a final report and data, and conducting the after-action meeting, are requirements in OAR [629-603-0200](#).

### Specifications of Work

The IRST expects the following tasks and deliverables:

#### Task 1. Project Management

The contractor will coordinate with the IRST to manage this project effectively and efficiently to accomplish this statement of work. The contractor will provide a preferred approach to managing this project, in cooperation with the IRST, that specifies how the contractor will keep the IRST informed of progress on tasks and deliverables and keep the project on time and within budget. In addition to the technical aspects of managing the project, the contractor will engage with the IRST as follows:

- A kick-off meeting [to bring the research team and the IRST together to align goals, scope, roles, and timelines](#)
- Regular interactions with the IRST [liaison and INR staff for key decisions/milestones. These interactions may include monthly \(or as needed\) meetings, email exchanges, or phone calls.](#)
- An after-action review meeting (required in rule) [to assess the project's process, implementation, and intended and actual outcomes to make improvements for future projects.](#)

#### Task 2. Conducting the Rapid Systematic Literature Review

A rapid systematic literature review process is more [streamlined](#) than a full systematic literature review, as described in CEE guidelines:

- 1) Reduce review and inputs beyond the IRST (e.g., no external workshops);
- 2) Reduce the number of databases searched and experts consulted;

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- 3) Rely on one reviewer, rather than two or more independent reviewers, when screening and extracting information from each publication. [However, for this project, two independent reviewers are required](#);
- 4) Limit the critical appraisal of study validity;
- 5) Limit the literature database to only relevant documents, rather than including those that were rejected; and,
- 6) No compilation of available empirical datasets.

**Activity 2.1.** Develop a protocol to conduct the rapid systematic literature review, including the list of questions, eligibility criteria, search strategy, study selection, data extraction, [and synthesis method](#). [The literature should pertain to the effects of forest harvesting on rapid, shallow slides and effects of such slides on HCP species and their habitats. Species from the HCP that are in eastern Oregon: Chinook Salmon, Steelhead, Sockeye Salmon, Bull Trout, Westslope Cutthroat Trout, Lahontan Cutthroat Trout, Great Basin Redband Trout, Mountain Whitefish, Southern Torrent Salamander, Coastal Giant Salamander, Cope's Giant Salamander, and Coastal Tailed Frog.](#)

The eligibility criteria should include a geographic extent that includes similar environments in the western U.S. (especially the Rocky Mountain states); and peer-reviewed and gray literature, although only limited searching for gray literature is expected (no formal surveys, convening of expert focus groups, etc.). [No definition of steep slope was provided in the PFA so the contractor might want to consider a definition such as "a slope of 10 degrees or more that has produced a significant mass movement in the geologic past."](#)

The final search strategy and methodology would be developed in consultation with the IRST.

- **Deliverable 2.1a.** Written protocol per the above-mentioned components.

**Activity 2.2.** Perform the rapid systematic literature search according to the protocols, including summary of findings tables.

- **Deliverable 2.2a.** [Bibliographic](#) database, including available studies related to the above thematic area, according to the above-mentioned methods, and containing the following variables (at a minimum): title, authors/institutions, Uniform Resource Locator (URL), Digital Object Identifier (DOI), summary description of the study, and comparators.
- **Deliverable 2.2b.** Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) study flow diagram and table of characteristics of included studies.
- **Deliverable 2.2c.** [A detailed draft systematic literature review report, including a description of the methods \(search, data extraction, bias assessment, etc.\); synthesis of findings and presentation of the systematic literature review \(and meta-analysis, if appropriate\), including the use of methods for appraisal of the evidence \(including accuracy and precision\), descriptive tables of the included studies; and review results.](#) The draft report will be reviewed by external reviewers and the IRST. Based on the review comments, a final report will be produced.

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## Task 3. Final Report

The contractor will produce a narrative final report of the review that synthesizes and summarizes the literature and findings. The final report will include:

- **Deliverable 3.1.** Final copy of systematic literature review report.
- **Deliverable 3.2.** Final copies of data
- **Deliverable 3.3.** PowerPoint presentation slides, when appropriate.
- **Deliverable 3.5.** A presentation to the IRST at a regularly planned IRST meeting.

## Task 4. After-action Review Meeting

This will be a meeting between the IRST, the contractor, and other cooperators (e.g., ODF, etc.) to assess the project’s process, implementation, and intended and actual outcomes to make improvements for future projects.

## C. Duration of Grant and General Timeline

The duration of proposed work is estimated to be about **X months**, after the 2-month award set-up period. The proposed work should begin **DATE** at the earliest, and deliverables, including the final report, are due no later than **October 30, 2026**.

### General Project Timeline

Deliverables	General Timeline
Kick-off meeting	Within 2 weeks of project start date
Interactions with IRST liaison and for key decisions/milestones	Monthly, or as needed
Conducting systematic literature rapid review	3-month duration
Draft technical scientific final report submitted for review	3 months after project start date
External and IRST review period	1-month duration
IRST returns draft to PI with external and IRST comments	Within 1 month of draft submission
Detailed final report*, data*, and all supporting documents submitted to IRST	October 1, 2026
Public presentation of project	October 18, 2026
An after-action review meeting between the IRST and the contractor and other cooperators*	October 18, 2026

\* Indicates deliverables as defined in rule, [OAR 629-603-0200\(6\)b](#).

## D. Funding

The maximum funding request for this competition is **\$80,000**. Grant funding comes from the Oregon Department of Forestry. Available funding is subject to change and rescission.

There is no cost share required for this opportunity.

## III. Full Proposal Submission Guidelines

Below are details on developing and submitting the full proposal. This guidance and full proposal submittal instructions and requirements will be available is also available on INR’s [IRST Grant Opportunities webpage](#).

Full proposals must be submitted by email, at [irst-contact@oregonstate.edu](mailto:irst-contact@oregonstate.edu) with the subject line “[PI last name], Steep Slopes RFP]” by **Thursday, March 19, 2026, before 11:59 p.m. PT.**

### A. Requested and Required Information for Full Proposal

A full proposal has three categories of requested and required information:

- Title Page
- Proposal Narrative
- Supplemental Information

**NOTE:** Principal Investigators at OSU do not need to submit proposals through the Cayuse system.

### B. Full Proposal Guidelines

Below are details on developing and submitting the full proposal. [The full proposal \(title page, proposal narrative, and supplemental documents\) must be submitted as a single PDF.](#) The proposal budget can be submitted as a separate document (in Excel format).

#### B.1 Title Page

The title page form ([LINK](#)), which is available on the [IRST Grant Opportunities webpage](#), must be completed, signed, and submitted as part of the full proposal.

#### B.2 Proposal Narrative

There is a **10-page limit** for the narrative. The page limit includes graphs and tables but excludes references and the additional requested/required elements listed above. All pages must be single- or double-spaced, 12-point font (Times New Roman, Arial, or Calibri preferred), and printable on 8.5-inch x 11-inch paper, with 1-inch margins.

Your narrative should include the following sections:

##### a. Technical Approach (10-page limit)

The technical approach must describe the proposer’s demonstrated understanding of the project by establishing a clear grasp of the requested tasks and deliverables considering the goals and desired outcomes. The approach must also include a detailed description of how the rapid systematic literature review will be conducted, and how the approach links to the deliverables in the Statement of Work. The proposer should describe any proven systematic approach to completing the work and should articulate the data and methods used in projects of similar scope and complexity as detailed in this RFP. The proposer should also highlight any

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suggestions for tasks and deliverables that could provide enhanced efficiency, i.e., robust deliverables.

### b. References

Provide those cited in the narrative. Note: This is not part of the 10-page limit.

### B.3 Supplemental Information

Supplemental information does not count toward the 10-page proposal narrative limit.

#### a. Project Timeline (1-page limit) (required and scored)

Using the tasks, deliverables, and general timeline in the Statement of Work as a guide, provide a detailed outline of the team's proposed strategy and discuss how the success of the project (i.e., objectives, timelines, milestones) and outcomes of the project will be measured and reported.

#### b. Project Management (1-page limit) (required and scored)

Describe how the project will be managed to achieve the project's outcomes and deliverables.

#### c. Qualifications (required and scored)

- **Project Team Overview.** The proposer should provide a summary of all team members and their roles, including subcontractors and senior management advisors. The proposer should demonstrate that the proposed team members and sub-contractors have the expertise, past performance, and qualifications to handle all aspects of the work to successfully implement the project. The proposer should describe who will fill the role of project manager and demonstrate that the project manager has sufficient and similar experience to ensure the project will be well managed.
- **Key Persons.** Supply curriculum vitae or biosketch for the PI, co-PIs, project manager, and other key persons (2-page limit, each). Biosketches should include information regarding recent projects pertinent to this RFP call.

#### d. Demonstrated Experience (optional)

The proposer shall submit a list of recent projects that demonstrate the key personnel's experience that are similar to the Scope of Work/Specifications detailed in this RFP. For each project, the proposer should include a brief description of the project and the final deliverable(s), and the name of funder/recipient of the final product(s).

#### e. Budget and Budget Justification (required and scored)

The proposer shall submit a clear, concise, and accurate budget and budget justification that reflects the financial plan for accomplishing the effort contained in the technical proposal. The proposer shall submit a full budget in sufficient detail so that a determination of reasonableness can be made.

The proposer is also required to provide complete justification for each dollar value entered for each project year in the budget for various categories, which may include the following:

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- ***Direct Labor:*** Direct labor should be detailed by level of effort (i.e., numbers of hours, etc.) of each labor category and the applicable labor rate. The source of labor rates shall be identified and verified. If rates are estimated, please provide the historical based used and clearly identify all escalation applied to derive the proposed rates.
- ***Fringe Benefit Rates:*** The source of fringe benefit rates shall be identified and verified.
- ***Travel:*** Travel costs must include a purpose and breakdown per trip to include destination, number of travelers, and duration.
- ***Materials/Equipment:*** List all material/equipment items by type and kind with associated costs and advise if the costs are based on vendor quotes and/or engineering estimates; provide copies of vendor quotes and/or catalog pricing data.
- ***Subaward costs:*** Submit all subaward proposals and analyses. Provide the method of selection used to determine the subaward. **Note:** A letter of commitment is required from each subaward source. Please use the form [\(LINK\)](#).
- ***Tuition:*** Provide details and verification for any tuition amounts proposed.
- ***Indirect Cost:*** Currently the negotiated indirect rate for awards is 26%. **Note:** For OSU PIs, indirect cost is charged to all direct costs. For non-OSU PIs, indirect cost is only applied to the first \$25,000.
- ***Any other proposed direct costs:*** The source should be identified and verified.

### f. Letters of Commitment and Support

- Letters of commitment from each PI and co-PI's authorized representative (required). Please use the template provided here [\(LINK\)](#).
- Letter of commitment from each subaward source (required, if applicable).
- Up to 3 letters of support from project partners or interested parties (optional; encouraged but not required).

All letters should be submitted as PDFs.

## IV. Proposal Development and Evaluation Process

### A. Transparent Review Process and Guidance for Proposers

The IRST is committed to a fair and transparent review process that addresses both study designs and study reports (OAR [629-603-0400\(4\)\(d\)](#)). INR is also providing guidance to PIs on preparing proposals that can be easily blinded by INR after submission (i.e., to facilitate removal of identifying information). This guidance will also be available on INR's IRST Grant Opportunities webpage:

- Consistent use of names and spelling is encouraged (e.g., use either nickname or full name throughout the proposal package, including budget materials).

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- Be mindful when citing resources by the Lead PI and/or CoPIs. Although this may be helpful for traditional reviews, it may make anonymity difficult to maintain.

### B. Proposal Development Process

The development and review of proposals is a multi-step process:

1. The IRST will conduct a question-and-answer period to help potential proposers better understand the research requirements and policy context, and to ask any clarifying questions. This will occur via an online meeting, as well as through the submission of written questions. Responses to written questions will be posted on the IRST RFP webpage.
2. Full proposals will be submitted via [email to irst-contact@oregonstate.edu](mailto:irst-contact@oregonstate.edu) with the subject line “[PI last name], Steep Slopes RFP]” before 11:59 p.m. Pacific Time, **Thursday, March 19, 2026**. No incomplete or late proposals will be accepted. All provided narrative guidance must be followed.
3. Full proposals will be rigorously reviewed following the process outlined in Section IV.C of this RFP.
4. A review panel comprised of an IRST liaison and external reviewers will evaluate the proposals using the review criteria provided below.
5. The full IRST will consider these evaluations and select a proposal to recommend for funding.
6. The IRST selects the successful proposer, as per [629-603-0200\(6\)\(d\)](#)
7. Proposers will be informed of final decisions by **mid- or late-April 2026**. INR and the IRST reserve the right to negotiate and/or adjust the final grant amount and work plan prior to award, as appropriate and consistent with university policy and funds available.

### C. Evaluation Process and Decision Criteria

Proposals that do not follow the guidelines outlined in this RFP will not be reviewed. Each compliant full proposal will be reviewed by external peer reviewers and an IRST Lead. External peer reviewers will provide both written comments and a proposal rating using review criteria (C.1.). All written peer reviews will then be provided to the IRST, who will review the proposals and external reviewer scores, and award the grant. The reviewers will not be directly associated with individual reviews.

As per rule, those serving on the review panel will be identified. INR will make their names available on its [IRST Grant Opportunities webpage](#).

#### C.1. Review Criteria and Weight

Proposers should directly and explicitly address the following criteria within their proposal. Each submittal will be rated using a point system, with a total of 100 points possible. Proposers will be

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evaluated based on the quality and extent to which criteria are addressed; failure to provide applicable information in the proposal will affect the final score:

### **Specific Project Criteria** (maximum total points for this section is 50)

- **Relevance:** How responsive is the proposal to the RFP criteria?
- **Timeline:** To what degree can the stated deliverables be completed within the proposed timeline?
- **Deliverables:** To what degree are the deliverables clearly defined?
- **Methodology:** To what degree does the project produce an objective, reliable, and extrapolatable product through clear, understandable, and robust methods?
- **Technical Merit:** To what degree is the proposed project feasibly and technically sound?
- **Quality Assurance and Control:** How well does the proposed work incorporate quality assurance/quality controls into its approach?

### **Project Team Qualifications** (maximum total points for this section is 25)

- **Knowledge:** Project team has specialized knowledge in the RFP topic areas.
- **Experience:** Project team has research or appropriate experience relevant to proposed work.
- **Project Understanding:** Project team has demonstrated understanding of needed research.

### **Project Budget** (maximum total points for this section is 25)

- **Alignment:** Project budget is justified and aligned with project goals, deliverables, and milestones.
- **Reasonableness:** Project supplies, materials, equipment, personnel and other costs are clearly described and reasonable to produce described deliverables.

## V. Award Administration Information

### A. Notice of Award

The IRST, via INR, will send a grant award notification email to the PI for. After the PI(s) acknowledge(s) receipt of email and acceptance of the grant award, an official “Notice of Award” will be sent. The Notice will include the following:

- Period of performance
- Name of the principal investigator
- Dollars committed and/or obligated
- Future year commitments
- Cost sharing (if required)
- Accounting and reporting obligations

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- Deliverables
- Payment to awardee
- Special terms and conditions
- General terms and conditions

### **B. Award Conditions**

In addition to the Notice of Award, OSU and INR prepare an agreement/contract that fully describes the conditions of the award for signature by all partners. Principal investigators cannot sign on behalf of their home organization/institution/unit. The project cannot begin until the agreement or contract is fully executed.

### **VI. Contact**

Proposers preparing full proposals for possible IRST funding should contact INR with questions.

For questions about the application, review, and approval process, and the overall funding policy, contact INR Director Lisa Gaines (<mailto:lisa.gaines@oregonstate.edu>, (541) 737-1976).

For questions on technical aspects or questions about private landowner engagement, contact INR Forest Landscapes Program Manager Sean Gordon (<mailto:sean.gordon@oregonstate.edu>, (541) 725-6617).

## Appendix A: AMPC Eastern Oregon Steep Slopes Research Questions Package

### A. Preliminary research questions

The research questions apply east of the crest of the Cascades<sup>1</sup> in Oregon and are to be answered via literature reviews. In addition to articulating an overview of relevant literature, the review should provide an assessment of how robust the conclusions from the literature are and key areas in which additional research may be needed.

Overarching Question:

What impacts do hillslope processes have on the covered species in the draft HCP and their habitats in Eastern Oregon?

Primary Focus:

What does the literature say about **upslope initiated shallow rapid slides** and **how timber harvesting may impact these** in **Eastern Oregon** environments?

Secondary Focus:

Are there **hillslope processes other than upslope initiated shallow rapid slides** that may affect covered species within the draft HCP and are these processes **changed by forest practices**?

### B. Research Question Package

The remainder of this document provides contextual information that details the context for the preliminary research questions, as required by rule<sup>2</sup>. The following are organized per the elements in this rule.

#### E. **B.1 The type of research**<sup>3</sup>

AMPC response:

*This research is of type OAR 629-603-0100(1)(a): “Conduct effectiveness monitoring by assessing the degree to which the rules facilitating particular forest conditions and ecological processes achieve the biological goals and objectives. This assessment may include evaluation of cumulative effects.”*

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<sup>1</sup> Note: ODF maintains a regulatory GIS layer of the FPA delineation between eastern and western Oregon.

<sup>2</sup> OAR 629-603-0200 (3)(a)

<sup>3</sup> OAR 629-603-0200(3)(a)(A)

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### F. **B.2 The rule, biological goals and objectives (BGOs), or other issue being studied**<sup>4</sup>

AMPC response:

The BGOs<sup>5</sup> are listed below with those applicable to these questions highlighted:

**“Overarching Goal:** Forest practices that support the survival and recovery of the covered species by providing clean, cool, connected, and complex habitats.

**Goal 1:** Provide clean water and substrate for the covered species.

o **Objective 1.1** - Forest practices near streams minimize sediment delivery.

o **Objective 1.2** – Slope Retention Areas reduce episodic sediment delivery to fish-bearing streams.

o **Objective 1.3** – Road runoff directly to streams is minimized.

o **Objective 1.4** – Roads are not a significant source of episodic sediment delivery to streams.

**Goal 2:** Shade and watershed processes controlling stream temperature provide cool water compatible with the needs of the covered species.

o **Objective 2.1** – Forest practices maintain stream shade sufficient to support desired cool water temperatures on fish-bearing streams.

o **Objective 2.2** – No-harvest RMAs maintain stream shade sufficient to support desired cool water temperatures for covered amphibians.

o **Objective 2.3** – Forest practices near non-fish-bearing perennial streams do not notably increase water temperatures in fish-bearing streams.

**Goal 3:** Stream network connectivity satisfies freshwater habitat needs for covered species.

o **Objective 3.1** – Road crossings on fish-bearing streams are passable by the covered fish species.

o **Objective 3.2** – Forest practices maintain the hydrologic continuity of stream-associated wetlands and stream-adjacent seeps and springs to stream habitats.

o **Objective 3.3** – Timber harvest maintains stream-associated connectivity in riparian areas along non-fish streams sufficient to support covered amphibians.

**Goal 4:** Riparian areas function to support complex habitats for the covered species.

o **Objective 4.1** – Mature, complex riparian forests are fostered in no-harvest zones of RMAs.

o **Objective 4.2** – Forest practices within tree retention areas of RMAs promote delivery of large wood.

o **Objective 4.3** – Designated Debris Flow Traversal Areas function to deliver large wood to fish-bearing streams.

o **Objective 4.4** – Forest practices maintain stream-associated wetlands and stream-adjacent seep and spring habitat for amphibians.”

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<sup>4</sup> OAR 629-603-0200(3)(a)(B)

<sup>5</sup> The most recent version of the BGOs is in the Dec. 2022 draft HCP. The BGOs will be finalized within the HCP due Dec. 31, 2027.

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The issue being studied is outlined in the PFA Report direction, cited below under context of the research question.

## **B.3 The objective of the research**<sup>6</sup>

### AMPC response:

The objective of this research is to inform deliberations about whether rules or other policies are needed regarding timber harvest and other forest practices on steep slopes in eastern Oregon to protect HCP-covered species.

## **B.4 A brief description of the context of the research question**<sup>7</sup>

AMPC response: The following direction was provided in the PFA Report and provides the foundation for these research questions:

# “CHAPTER 3. TIMBER HARVEST ON STEEP SLOPES

## 3.2 Goals

- *The goals of the PFA commitments regarding timber harvest on steep slopes is to provide large wood and sediment consistent with maintaining or improving aquatic habitat within large basins over long timeframes. (For the purposes of this Chapter, large basins are those of a size equivalent to those supporting independent populations of Oregon coastal coho salmon. In modeling to support the PFA, these are USGS HUC 4th Field [8-digit] basins). To accomplish this, sediment sources and debris flow runout paths will be identified and a subset of these will be managed during timber harvest activities to retain trees and other vegetation. These actions, together with other HCP commitments, are intended to provide high-quality habitat to support recovery and long-term conservation of the species covered by this HCP on private forestlands.*
- **3.2.1 Objectives**
- *Aligned with the overall goals for timber harvest on steep slopes to provide high-quality habitat that supports the recovery, protection, and long-term conservation of covered species on private forestlands, the Authors establish the following objectives under the PFA:*
  - a. *Leave trees in Designated Debris Flow Traversal Areas to help create and maintain high-quality habitat in:*
    - 1) *Type F or Type SSBT streams by delivering large wood and regulating sediment storage and transport.*
    - 2) *Type N streams by creating shade and cover for amphibians covered under the HCP.*
  - b. *Leave trees in Slope Retention Areas to:*
    - 1) *Reduce timber-harvest-related increases in the frequency and volume of sediment delivered*

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<sup>6</sup> OAR 629-603-0200(3)(a)(C)

<sup>7</sup> OAR 629-603-0200(3)(a)(D)

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- to Type F or Type SSBT streams from mass wasting events.
- 2) Contribute large wood to Type F or Type SSBT streams.
  - c. Leave trees on a subset of steep (>70%) slopes immediately adjacent to Type F or Type SSBT streams to:
    - 1) Stabilize these areas.
    - 2) Contribute large wood to Type F or Type SSBT streams.

### 3.3.8 Timber Harvest on Steep Slopes in Eastern Oregon

- *The Private Forest Accord does not prescribe new management measures for landslide initiation zones or debris flow traversal channels in Eastern Oregon. The Authors agree that Eastern Oregon’s unique geologies and climates likely mean that these processes are different in magnitude, frequency, and impact on the covered species, when compared to Western Oregon. Similarly, the impact of timber harvesting on these processes is potentially different in Eastern Oregon. In light of this uncertainty, the Authors agree that the Adaptive Management Program shall, beginning no later than January 1, 2024, examine the scientific literature on the impacts that hillslope processes have on the covered species in Eastern Oregon. The primary focus will be on upslope initiated shallow rapid slides and how timber harvesting may impact these in Eastern Oregon environments. A secondary and more limited focus is whether other hillslope processes that likely affect covered species are changed by forest practices. Findings of the Adaptive Management Program on these topics will be presented to the Board of Forestry. These findings should focus primarily on the importance of shallow rapid landslides in Eastern Oregon to habitat for the covered species and the potential modification of these processes by forest practices or lack thereof. The report on this primary topic may or may not include recommendations as to desirability and relative importance of potential management measures. In addition, the report should convey whether the secondary review of literature on the effect of forest practices on other hillslope processes merits more thorough consideration by the Adaptive Management Program in light of scientific literature on the connection of these processes to covered species. Nothing in this Report should be read to suggest that any additional Eastern Oregon steep slope or other hillslope prescriptions are, or are not, necessary. The timber harvest prescriptions for steep slopes established under Section 3.3.3 of this Chapter for Designated Debris Flow Traversal Areas and under Section 3.3.4 of this Chapter for Designated Sediment Source Areas and Slope Retention Areas do not apply to any private forest ownership class east of the summit of the Cascade Mountains. The timber harvest prescriptions for steep slopes established under Section 3.3.7 Stream Adjacent Failures apply to all private forest ownership classes both west and east of the summit of the Cascade Mountains.”*